

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE STUDY
OF THE COMMUNIST THEORY OF
STATE AND REVOLUTION

by

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PREFACE

The present study is intended as a critical analysis of the Soviet efforts to provide a theoretical explanation of the communist regimes which emerged at the end of World War II in Eastern Europe and elsewhere. It attempts to relate the theory of "people's democracy" to the various phases of actual Soviet policy as well as to the policies of the international communist movement. Finally, it appraises the future usefulness of the theory of people's democracy for promoting the cause of Soviet communism.

The theory of people's democracy is largely a Soviet product. The contributions made by the theoreticians from other countries of the communist orbit are of minor importance, and represent variants, rather than any independent construction.

The purpose of the theory of people's democracy is to provide, within the frame of reference of Marxism-Leninism, a philosophical justification for the communist political systems other than the Soviet. It is primarily concerned with the intrinsic values of such systems, their posited goals, and their use as instruments for the establishment of Marxist-Leninist socialism. In this respect, the theory of people's democracy is more an ideology than a statement of the institutional principles on which the system works.

In their inquiry into the nature of the people's democratic state, the communist theoreticians do not proceed in the customary manner of seizing upon certain similarities, comparing various instances, giving common names to similar phenomena, and then attempting generalizations for the purpose of explaining the operative principles of the system. Instead, they have selected from the vast arsenal of Marxism-Leninism certain tenets pertaining to the theory of the state, and applied them, as rigidly fixed assumptions, to situations prevailing in various countries after World War II, without regard to considerable differences in the social and economic structure of the individual countries. The political systems of Russia's satellites were cast into the established categories of the communist theory of the state so as to conform to the ideal of the "unity of theory and practice."

In combining the doctrine and a program for action in the theory of people's democracy, the communist theoreticians were faced with the major difficulty of reconciling two contradictory objectives. The doctrine demands a basically uniform political system for all communist states, while the program for action requires flexibility with departures from the established pattern. Moreover, while uniformity is desirable from the point of view of the doctrine, it could not be carried too far as concerns the theoretical interpretation of the meaning of "people's democracy," because

it was necessary to present the Soviet state as something different from other socialist states which, in theory, were historically less advanced in their political and social development. A complete identification of the people's democracies with the Soviet state would jeopardize the status of superiority of the Soviet Union vis-à-vis its junior partners who still suffer from the consequences of their historical inequality. Still, it was not advisable either to admit that socialism can be built in a manner different from that in the Soviet Union, because this would amount to an assertion that the Soviet way is not the only one, and possibly not the best one.

Moreover, the theory had to serve different objectives at different times and, consequently, had to be repeatedly adjusted. It is therefore not surprising that the now existing formulation of the theory of people's democracy, as the final product of a long and often erratic development, shows not only the defects inherent in the Marxist-Leninist theory of the state proper, but a number of other shortcomings which, for the most part, are due to a schematic adaptation of the theory to changing situations.

The author of this study had the opportunity to follow, on the scene, the development of people's democracy in Czechoslovakia from 1945 to 1948. As a case study of people's democracy, Czechoslovakia was exceptionally well suited for an investigation of this type. It was the only country of the Soviet orbit which appeared to have accomplished a successful compromise between the Soviet system and Western parliamentary democracy. In the country itself, the name "people's democracy" was accepted by communists as well as non-communists, although it meant somewhat different things to different people. Despite the decisive influence of the Communist Party in internal and external affairs of the country, the governmental system of Czechoslovakia was still sufficiently different from that of the Soviet Union to create an impression that people's democracy contained at least some elements of parliamentary democracy.

This study involved various terminological problems. The first difficulty had to do with the different meaning of the terms "socialism" and "communism" in the Western and the communist usages. Socialism implies socialization (nationalization) of the means of production and distribution, and the management of these means under the system of social, *i.e.*, state, control. In this respect there is no essential difference between the vocabularies of Western democracies and the communist countries with regard to the connotation of the term "socialism." However, in the West the term "socialism" is usually associated with the reformist socialist parties who seek to accomplish socialization (nationalization) gradually and through the methods of parliamentary democracy, in contrast to the radical revolutionary parties who seek to establish socialism by means of violence and through a revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat. In the Western usage, this latter form of establishing socialism is called "communism." The term "communism" thus denotes the policy of a radical, revolutionary

socialist party, such as was the Bolshevik Party in Russia. We speak of Russian, Chinese, or other communism on the grounds of its revolutionary character. However, when the Soviet or other communists speak of communism, they use the term in a different sense. To them, "communism" is that hypothetical ultimate stage in the development of socialist society in which distribution will be made according to the wants and needs of the worker as contrasted to the present lower stage in which payment for work is based on the quality and quantity of the work done. "Communism" is the stage of the future which has not yet been reached by any socialist country. Even in Russia, the current stage is still that of a "transition from socialism to communism." While Russia, and now also Czechoslovakia and Rumania, pass through a socialist phase on the way to communism, other "people's democracies" are at present building socialism, and still have a long way to go to reach a stage comparable to that of the Soviet Union. The dictatorship of the proletariat, whether in its Soviet form or people's democratic form, is not yet communism, regardless of how revolutionary it may be.

In this study, the terms "socialism" and "communism" will be used largely in the special sense as used by communist spokesmen, unless stated otherwise.

The term "people's democracy," itself involves a terminological difficulty. On one hand, it is used in a political sense and refers to a form of government; on the other hand, especially if used in the plural, it refers to a state, or the group of states which have that particular system as their form of government.

The present study was primarily concerned with the notion of "people's democracy" proper, but is also a critical analysis of a new addition to the political forms of transition from capitalism to socialism which made its appearance in the communist vocabulary under the name "national democracy." It has also seemed appropriate to include a discussion of the recently revived concept of the "popular front." Both "national democracy" and the "popular front" coalitions appear to be preferred at the present time by the Soviet Union as convenient instruments toward the eventual establishment of communist governments in various parts of the world.

CHAPTER I

THE ORIGINS OF PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY

The communist and communist-controlled regimes which emerged in various European and Asian countries after World War II were officially called, in the communist terminology, "people's democracies."¹

This pleonastic term must be interpreted against the background of the Marxian theory of the state to be understood. In the Marxian doctrine of the state, the parliamentary democracy of the Western type is not a democracy but rather a dictatorship of the ruling minority, the bourgeoisie. The name "people's democracy" is intended to distinguish the Marxian democracy from its bourgeois predecessor, and to describe a "true" democracy, liberated from the rule of special interests, in which the people are the real rulers, a "democracy of the people."

Although the great vogue of the term "people's democracy" did not set in until the end of the Second World War, its synonym, the "people's republic," appeared early in the history of Soviet communism, but was applied to Asia rather than Europe. An official publication of the Mongolian People's Republic calls Mongolia "the first people's democracy in the world."²

The emergence of the somewhat vague term "people's republic" in Asia was directly connected with the care exercised by Russia in choosing the names for the new states which came into being in the wake of the October Revolution, and reflected the policy of expediency followed by the Soviet Union in its international relations. The prevailing tendency was to keep any reference to the Soviet system out of the Far East and to stress democracy instead of socialism. A remarkable example of this tendency was

1. The term "people's democracy" is used exclusively by the communists. It has seldom been used by non-communist writers. However, similar names were used upon occasions by non-communists. President Beneš, as early as 1943 and 1945, referred to the future post-World War II Czechoslovak Republic as "people's state" or "people's democratic state." In his broadcast from Moscow on December 13, 1943, he said the following: "The new (Czechoslovak) state shall be a democratic and a genuine people's state." Eduard Beneš, *Paměti*, Part 2, Vol. 1 (Praha: Orbis, 1947), p. 388. In his broadcast address of February 16 and 17, 1945, he said: "Our state shall be a democratic one, i.e., a state with all civil liberties and guarantees, but it will be a people's democratic state with a new, refreshed, democracy." Eduard Beneš, *Šest let exilu a světové války* (Praha: Orbis, 1946), p. 249.

2. N. Zhagvaral, *The Mongolian People's Republic* (Ulan-Bator: Committee of Sciences of the Mongolian People's Republic, 1956), p. 42.

Lenin's instruction of August 13, 1920, concerning the Far Eastern Republic, which put the main emphasis on establishing a "friendly" and "democratic" government, without demanding any open socialization or abolition of private property.³ This tendency sharply contrasted with the developments in Russia, and other European countries, where the main emphasis was on socialism and the establishment of a soviet system. The new revolutionary governments, such as the short-lived Bavarian Soviet Republic (April 13-May 1, 1919),⁴ and the Hungarian Soviet Republic (March-July 1919),⁵ were eager to show their soviet-like character. The ostensible purpose of this deliberate accent on the Russian pattern of socialism was to show the identification of the European workers with the Russian Revolution.⁶

Socialist catchwords were conspicuously absent in Russia's dealing with Asia, not only because attempts to impress the herdsmen in Central Asia with the slogans of socialism apparently were regarded as futile, but also because the policy of expediency required caution in order to allay the fears of the Allies, especially Japan, who would not have tolerated the establishment of Soviet republics within striking distance.⁷ The very names of the Soviet-controlled republics in Asia were indicative of this tendency. Thus the new regime in Outer Mongolia received the name "The Mongolian People's Government," which was described by Pravda as a "bourgeois-democratic system of a new type."⁸ In its political program, the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, founded in 1921, demanded the establishment of political democracy and expressly omitted socialization.⁹ Similarly, the regime established in the Tuva region was called "Tuvianian People's Republic." In some cases, even the reference to the "people's" character

3. David Dallin, *The Rise of Russia in Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1949), pp. 170-71. See also John N. Hazard, "The Constitution of the Mongol People's Republic and Soviet Influences," *Pacific Affairs*, xxi, No. 2 (1948), p. 163.

4. *Bolshaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia*, 2. izd. (Moskva, 1950) iv, pp. 20-21. See also Erich Mühsam, *Von Eisner bis Leviné; die Entstehung der bayerischen Räterepublik*. Persönlicher Rechenschaftsbericht über die Revolutionsereignisse in München vom 7. November 1918 bis zum 13. April 1919 (Berlin: Fanal-Verlag, 1929), p. 63.

5. *Bolshaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia*, vii, pp. 383-84.

6. See G. von Stackelberg "Kommunizm i strany narodnoi demokratii" *Vestnik po izucheniiu istorii i kultury SSSR*, No. 3, 1952. German translation of this article "Die sowjetische Theorie der Volksdemokratie" in *Ostprobleme*, v, No. 17 (April, 1953), p. 676. In this general setting, the attitude of the ephemeral Finnish Socialist Workers' Republic of 1918 must have appeared entirely out of place when its government put forward territorial demands against Russia.

7. Cf. Walter Russell Batsell, *Soviet Rule in Russia* (New York: MacMillan, 1929), p. 236.

8. *Pravda*, April 8, 1936, quoted in Dallin, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

9. Dallin, *op. cit.*, p. 190. The government of Mongolia was set up first as a constitutional monarchy under Bodgya Khan. When he died on June 13, 1924, the People's Government issued a decree abolishing the monarchy and founding the People's Republic of Mongolia. Zhagvaral, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

of the regime was omitted. The Far Eastern Republic, whose independence was declared by a local constituent assembly on April 6, 1921, was called simply a "republic." On May 14, 1920, Moscow granted recognition to this state as a "separate, independent, democratic republic." The Ghilian Republic in Iran (1920-21) also was called a mere "republic." The two soviet republics, Soviet Republic Khorezm and Soviet People's Republic Bukhara, although called "Soviet," refrained from making any proclamation for socialism in their constitutions; the constitution of Khorezm even explained the reasons why socialism was not adopted.¹⁰

While the attitude of the Soviet Union toward the republics in Central Asia and the Far East was clearly dictated by reasons not unlike those which determined the Soviet policy in Eastern Europe a quarter of a century later, no attempt was made at that time to interpret these semi-independent regimes within the theoretical framework of Marxism. With the incorporation of the Asian republics into the Soviet Union the term "people's republic" finally disappeared from the communist political vocabulary.

The renaissance of the term "people's republic" did not come until after the end of World War II. The soviet-controlled regimes in Eastern Europe, in spite of their ardor in imitating the Soviet Union as closely as possible, still differed considerably from their Soviet model, and their development toward socialism, while revolutionary in its political and socio-economic aspects, bore little similarity to the pattern once followed by the Soviet Union. The terms "people's democracy" or "new democracy," have been used to describe these communist-controlled governments in Eastern Europe as early as 1944-45. Nevertheless, the communists still abstained from interpreting the concept of people's democracy in terms of Marxism-Leninism. It should be pointed out that in the inter-war period, a Soviet-like system was still the ideal and goal of all communist parties. It may be recalled that in China, a "soviet" was organized in Nanchang in 1927, following Nanchang's occupation by the Chinese communist troops. It was not until 1940, however, when Mao Tse-tung launched his concept of "new democracy," in which he stressed the importance of the communist leadership but omitted any reference to a Soviet-like nature of such a regime.¹¹

In its Draft Platform of Action in 1930 the Indian Communist Party openly demanded the establishment of a soviet government and the creation of an Indian Workers' and Peasants' Soviet Republic.¹² According to the

10. Hazard, *op. cit.*, p. 163. On Khorezm see *Entsiklopedicheskii slovar Russkogo Bibliograficheskogo Instituta Granat*. 7. izd. Vol. 41-III (Moskva, n.d.), p. 509.

11. Mao Tse-tung, *New Democracy*; Basis of Social, Political and Economic Structure of New China (Shanghai: Chinese-American Pub. Co., 1949), p. 82 (translator's note).

12. Democratic Research Service, Bombay, *Indian Communist Party Documents*, 1930-1956 (Bombay, 1957), p. 6.

Statutes of the Communist Party of India of 1934, the Party "carries out the leadership of the proletariat, the toiling peasants and all the toiling masses, organizing them in the struggle for the victorious anti-imperialist and agrarian revolution, for the formation of a workers' and peasants' government on the basis of the soviet power..."¹³ By 1948, however, the demands for the establishment of a Soviet system in India were already superseded by more up-to-date calls for people's democracy:

The Communist Party of India fulfills the role of the leadership of the proletariat, the toiling peasants and the other sections of the toiling people, organizing them in the struggle for the victorious anti-imperialist and agrarian revolution, for complete national independence, for the establishment of a people's democratic state led by the working class, for the realization of the dictatorship of the proletariat to build up socialism and a classless society according to the teachings of Marxism-Leninism.¹⁴

In its Statement of Policy of 1948, the Party requested the establishment of a people's democratic republic based upon the hegemony of the working class and the direct rule of the toilers.¹⁵ On October 12, 1949, B. T. Ranadive, Secretary General of the Communist Party of India, declared that the toiling masses of India would "fight more determinedly and courageously their battle for ending the present regime and establishing the rule of people's democracy."¹⁶ Similar demands were put forward in the *Tactical Line of the Communist Party of India* in 1953 and in a number of other official statements.

The French communists, as late as 1940, called for the establishment of the Soviet Republic of France.¹⁷ Soon afterwards, however, the French Communist Party began to exhort the population of the countries engaged in the war to rise, and to set up revolutionary "people's regimes" which would immediately start negotiations for an armistice. The concept of such people's regimes appeared again in the communist propaganda after the surrender of France and remained in use until the German armies attacked the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941. When the Soviet Union became involved in the war, the propaganda for the people's regimes suddenly stopped, and was replaced by slogans of patriotism and alliance of all

13. Democratic Research Service, Bombay. *Indian Communist Party Documents, 1930-1956* (Bombay, 1957), p. 26.

14. Communist Party of India, *Constitution, Adopted by the Second Congress of the Communist Party of India*. March, 1948, (Bombay, 1948).

15. Communist Party of India, Central Committee, *Toward the Democratic Front to Win Real Independence and People's Democracy; Statement of Policy* (Bombay, 1948), p. 10.

16. Democratic Research Service, Bombay, *Indian Communist Party Documents*, p. 47.

17. "Vive la République Française de Soviets qui donnera à la France le travail, la liberté, l'indépendance!" This leaflet was distributed by the French communists at the end of 1940 in the Department of Seine. See A. Rossi, *La guerre des papillons; quatre ans de politique communiste, 1940-1944* (Paris: Les Iles d'Or, 1954), p. 54.

democratic nations in the fight against fascism. The nature of these "people's regimes" was never clearly defined by the French communists. A. Rossi sees in them the beginnings of the future people's democracies.¹⁸

The vagueness of the concept of people's democracy and its different meaning to different people was reflected in the fact that there apparently was no agreement as to where and how the term originated. It has been already said that Mongolia claimed for herself the honor of having been the first people's democracy in the world. At a Conference on the nature and peculiarities of people's democracy in Asia held in the Oriental Institute of the Soviet Academy of Sciences in November 1951, I. IA. Zlatkin declared, however, that the first people's democracy actually was the People's Republic of Bukhara, and not the Mongolian People's Republic which was merely a "bourgeois-democratic republic of a special type."¹⁹ V. N. Niki-forov, in the same discussion, expressed the opinion that the Chinese revolution of 1927-1929 was already a struggle for people's democracy regardless of the fact that the organs of people's democratic power came into existence only after the end of World War II. Similarly, G. E. Ehrenburg held that people's democracy, as a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the people, had arisen in China prior to the Second World War.²⁰ Other participants in the debate, Martinov, Khaifets and Zikirianskaia, refused, however, to regard countries like the Mongolian People's Republic as genuine people's democracies, and insisted that the real people's democracies emerged only after World War II. I. P. Trainin, found that a type of a people's democratic government appeared during the period of the Popular Front in Spain (1936-1938).²¹ According to Eugene Varga, the term was born under specific conditions in Eastern Europe after World War II, and meant something "entirely new in the history of mankind."²² It also was suggested that the name and the idea of this different variety of communism were apparently first used by Mao Tse-tung in his *New Democracy* in 1940.²³ Some students of Soviet communism stressed the "striking similarity" between the post-World War II people's fronts and the regimes advocated by

18. A. Rossi, "Théorie des démocraties populaires," *Preuves*, (May, 1953). A German translation of this article in *Ost-Probleme* under the title "Die Mediatisierung der Satellitenstaaten," v, No. 33 (August 1953) p. 1388.

19. "O kharaktere i osobennostiakh narodnoi demokratii v stranakh Vostoka." *Izvestiia Akademii Nauk SSSR. Seriya istorii i filosofii*, ix, No. 1 (1952) p. 84. A German translation in *Sowjetische Beiträge zur Staats- und Rechtstheorie* (Berlin: Verlag Kultur und Fortschritt 1953), p. 304.

20. *Ibid.*

21. I. P. Trainin, "Demokratiia osobogo tipa," *Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo*, Nos. 1 and 3 (1947), pp. 1-5.

22. E. S. Varga, "Demokratiia novogo tipa," *Mirovoe khoziaistvo i mirovaia politika*, No. 3, 1947, Moskva, 1947. Summary in Samuel L. Sharp, "New Democracy; a Soviet Interpretation," *American Perspective*, 1, No. 6 (1947), p. 375.

23. Samuel L. Sharp, *New Constitutions in the Soviet Sphere*, (Washington: Foundation for Foreign Affairs, 1950), p. 11.

the parties of the Communist International in the thirties,²⁴ others believed that the term "popular democracy" was created by Tito who, at the Congress of the Yugoslav Fatherland Front in 1945, defined the "new type of democracy" as a "democracy based upon the social equality of the masses."²⁵

In spite of the fact that the term "people's democracy" was in use in Eastern Europe ever since 1945, no attempt was made to define it as a new political concept. In the general parlance it meant nothing more than a political and economic system in which socialism, both Marxist and non-Marxist, had an important place. Spokesmen as different as Gottwald and Beneš were talking of Czechoslovakia as a "people's democratic state," but neither Stalin nor any other political figure of a comparable stature attempted to explain the character of these pro-soviet "friendly" regimes in Eastern Europe in terms of Marxist-Leninist ideology. The official silence on the part of the Soviet leaders during the immediate post-war period led some people, both inside and outside Russia, to believe that perhaps there was indeed a possibility for the peoples of Eastern Europe to choose a road to socialism different from that followed by the Soviet Union.²⁶

The uncertainty and vagueness of the pre-1948 concept of people's democracy were also reflected in the ever-changing number of countries which were entitled to carry the name "people's democracy." According to Varga (1946), the original states of the "new democracy" were Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Albania. Trainin added Hungary and Rumania to the list. Farberov, writing in the fall of 1949, listed as people's democracies Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Rumania. In addition, he also mentioned the Mongolian People's Republic and the Korean People's Democratic Republic, but included neither East Germany nor China. As a result of the Stalin-Tito quarrel, Yugoslavia, once among the leading people's democracies, was dropped from the list.²⁷ When the Chinese communists came to power in 1949, Communist China, after some delay, was classed by Moscow with other people's democracies. It should be emphasized that the number of people's democracies continued to fluctuate. In 1959, the Soviet Union recognized eleven people's democracies: the People's Republic of China, the Polish People's Republic, the Czechoslovak Republic, the Hungarian People's Republic, the Rumanian People's Republic, the People's Republic

24. Gordon Skilling, "People's Democracy, the Proletarian Dictatorship and the Czechoslovak Path to Socialism," *American-Slavic and East-European Review*, x, No. 2 (April, 1951), p. 108.

25. Franz Borkenau, *European Communism* (London: Faber and Faber, 1953), p. 484.

26. Cf. Ruth Amende Rosa, "The Soviet Theory of People's Democracy," *World Politics*, I, No. 4 (July, 1949), p. 490.

27. N. P. Farberov, *Gosuderstvennoe pravo stran narodnoi demokratii* (Moskva: Gos. izdatelstvo iuridicheskoi literatury, 1945). See Table of Contents and a special leaflet inserted in the book, dated August 1949.

of Bulgaria, the People's Republic of Albania, the German Democratic Republic, the Mongolian People's Republic, the Korean People's Democratic Republic and the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam.²⁸ The New Communist Manifesto, adopted by the representatives of the eighty-one communist parties in Moscow, November-December, 1960, enumerated the following people's democracies: The People's Democratic Republics of Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, the German Democratic Republic, the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, China, the Korean People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Poland, and Rumania. Czechoslovakia has become the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, and was put into the same general category as the USSR.²⁹

The list of people's democracies apparently is far from final. In 1963-1964, three new people's republics made their appearance, the Algerian People's Democratic Republic, the People's Republic of Zanzibar and Pemba, and the Congolese People's Republic (Stanleyville). In the 1963 May Day slogans in Moscow, Cuba was alphabetically listed among people's democracies. Rumania ceased to be a people's democracy in 1963, and became instead a "socialist" state.

In the absence of an authoritative statement by Moscow, the undisputed ideological center of world communism at the end of World War II, the door was left open for various efforts to fit the communist-controlled states, with their peculiar features, into the conceptual framework of the Soviet theory of the state. During the initial period, extending roughly into the second half of 1948, only a few attempts were made to explain the phenomenon that the countries of Eastern Europe were developing toward socialism in a manner differing somewhat from the pattern of a violent revolution which had been followed by the Soviet Union. There was emphasis on the differences between the Soviet path and that of the East European coun-

28. Enumerated in Khrushchev's *Report to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, February 14, 1956* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1956), p. 9.

29. Dan H. Jacobs (ed.), *The New Communist Manifesto and Related Documents* (2d ed.; New York: Harper, 1962), p. 17. See also "The Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Draft) 1961," in *The Communist Blueprint for the Future*; the complete texts of all four Communist Manifestoes, 1848-1961 (New York: Dutton, 1962), p. 118.

People's democracies and the socialist states were all put in one category in Brezhnev's Report to the Twenty Third Congress of the CPSU on March 29, 1966. Brezhnev stated that the CPSU maintains "good, brotherly, relations" with the People's Republic of Bulgaria, People's Republic of Hungary, Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, the German Democratic Republic, the Korean People's Democratic Republic, the Republic of Cuba, the Mongolian People's Democratic Republic, People's Republic of Poland, the Socialist Republic of Rumania, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Leonid I. Brezhnev, *Otchetnii doklad Tsentral'nogo komiteta KPSS XXIII s"ezdu Kommunisticheskoi partii Sovetskogo Soiuza. Pravda*, March 30, 1966.

tries, a tendency which was welcomed and perhaps encouraged by the Soviet leaders. It was apparently in the interest of the Soviet foreign policy to stress the independent development of the countries of Eastern Europe in order to placate some very real national feelings in those countries, as well as to quiet down the rising suspicions of Russia's war-time allies and, further, to present Russia's own development as something unique and perfect, standing high above all others, something that would provide an example for the new apprentices in the construction of socialism. The views of Soviet scholars engaged in a search for a suitable theoretical explanation of the governments in Eastern Europe were by no means uniform. They all agreed on only one characteristic feature of the new governments, namely, that the countries of the "new" or "people's democracy" were states of a transitional character.

"Specific Paths" of Development

In March 1947, Eugene Varga, a prominent Soviet economist, published in the review *Mirovoe khoziaistvo i mirovaia politika* an article under the title "Demokratia novogo tipa" (Democracy of a New Type). He defined the "new democracy" as a social order in which feudal forms of land-ownership were liquidated, large industrial and banking enterprises were owned by the state, but private ownership of the means of production in other fields still existed. According to Varga, the regimes of the countries of Eastern Europe were "something entirely new in the history of mankind." The "hegemony of the proletariat," in the form of the leadership of the communist parties, was firmly established in those countries; however, according to Varga, these states were not dictatorships of the proletariat because parties representing non-proletarian classes, such as the peasants, the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie, still participated in the government. It was not at all necessary, said Varga, that the states of the new democracy needed a state structure of the Soviet type in order to be able to exercise successfully the rule of the working class. They represented rather a third type of government, being neither dictatorships of the proletariat nor dictatorships of the bourgeoisie. They were neither capitalist nor socialist. They were, in essence, states of transition from capitalism to socialism, and all were heading toward socialism which was to be established through the development of the nationalized sector of the economy.

An essential part of Varga's analysis of people's democracy was his admission that the rule of the workers could be established in the form of a parliamentary democracy:

A parliamentary democracy of the Western type may be a suitable form of government for these states, because the leading role of the communist parties

in Eastern Europe makes it certain that these governments will serve the people rather than the monopolistic bourgeoisie.³⁰

I. P. Trainin, in his articles published in the review *Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo*, Nos. 1 and 3, 1947, described the new regimes in Eastern Europe as "democracies of special type," similar to the political system which emerged during the period of the Popular Front in Spain in 1936-1938.

Trainin was somewhat more cautious in his statements concerning the character of the new regimes. While he insisted that a dictatorship of the proletariat was inevitable during the stage of transition from capitalism to socialism, he also stressed that the communist parties of Eastern Europe should recognize the need for broad coalitions based on national and democratic programs rather than on the needs of socialism. The communist parties should, of course, have their "hegemony" for a successful struggle, but they also needed the full support of the broad masses for the defense of the national independence and of the democratic achievements.³¹

Other Soviet scholars of the pre-1948 period also stressed the newness and uniqueness of the political system of people's democracy, and pointed out that neither Marx nor Lenin could have foreseen the form of the new democracy "because it was created in specific historical circumstances, special conditions which could not have been anticipated."³² Zhdanov's definition of people's democracy was rather vague and failed to bring any new interpretation to the concept. In his speech delivered at the Cominform Conference in September 1947, he defined the people's republic as a state where "the power belongs to the people, where large-scale industry, transport and banks are owned by the state, and where the bloc of the laboring classes of the population, headed by the working class, constitutes a leading force." Zhdanov, too, stressed the transitional character of the people's democratic state by pointing out that the people's republics were "paving the way for entry into the path of socialist development."³³

The official silence on the part of the high priests of communist orthodoxy not only encouraged the Soviet writers in their intellectual exercises, but also led to a concept of a really different road to socialism. Various communist leaders in Eastern Europe began to formulate their own concepts of specific paths of development, suggesting a possibility that their countries

30. E. S. Varga, "Demokratiia novogo tipa" *Mirovye khoziaistvo i mirovaia politika*, No. 3 (1947), p. 6. Cf. also E. S. Varga, *Izmeneniia v ekonomike kapitalizma v itoge Vtoroi mirovoi voiny* (Moskva: Gos. izd-vo polit. lit. 1946), p. 14.

31. I. P. Trainin, "Demokratiia osobogo tipa," *Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo*, No. 1 (1947), pp. 1-15; No. 3 (1947), pp. 1-14. Summary in Samuel L. Sharp "New Democracy," *American Perspective*, 1, No. 6 (1947), p. 376.

32. A. Leontiev, "Ekonomicheskie osnovy novoi demokrati," *Planovoe khoziaistvo*, No. 4 (1947), pp. 63-79, quoted in Sharp, *New Constitutions in the Soviet Sphere* (Washington: Foundation for Foreign Affairs, 1950), p. 12.

33. In U.S. Congress, House, *The Strategy and Tactics of World Communism* (Washington, 1948), p. 213.

might be able to proceed to socialism in ways different from that of the Soviet Union. They agreed that there was only one socialism, but insisted that the roads to it varied, and that the peoples of different countries had a right to choose various approaches to socialism with regard to diverse objective conditions. Dimitrov in Bulgaria spoke of the "Bulgarian course toward socialism," of a "realistic and painless road to socialism," and of a transition to socialism in a different way than in the Soviet Union.³⁴ Gomulka in Poland went unusually far in his own interpretation of the people's democratic road to socialism. He stressed the differences between the revolutionary development in Poland and in the Soviet Union by pointing out that the socio-economic changes in the Soviet Union were carried out through a bloody revolution whereas in Poland they were brought about peacefully; that the USSR, in its development, had to traverse the path of the dictatorship of the proletariat which was not necessary in Poland and could be bypassed entirely; and, that the form of government in the USSR was that of the soviets whereas Poland was a parliamentary democracy.³⁵ Gomulka also denied the necessity of a class struggle in Poland. He furthermore denied the existence of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the contemporary Soviet Union, insisting that the dictatorship of the proletariat there withered away with the liquidation of the exploiting classes, and was replaced by the Soviet democracy.³⁶

Gomulka defined the Polish path to socialism as follows:

We have chosen our own Polish path of development which we call the path of people's democracy. Under the present conditions no dictatorship of the working class, and even less a dictatorship of one party is necessary or intended. We believe that the government in our country can be carried out through all democratic parties cooperating one with another. This point of view results from the socio-political character of Poland. Our democracy and the social system which we are building here has no precedent in history... We are not a state with a socialist system because the non-nationalized sector has still an important place in our national economy... The type of our democracy is not identical with the traditional democracies in other countries except with those which are governed by a parliament with a socialist majority.³⁷

34. Dimitrov's speech of February 1946, quoted in Gordon Skilling, "People's Democracy, the Proletarian Dictatorship and the Czechoslovak Path to Socialism," *American-Slavic and East European Review*, x, No. 2 (April, 1951), p. 102, note.

35. Wladyslaw Gomulka, "Jednoscia silni," *Nowe drogi*, No. 1 (Styczen 1947), p. 6.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 9. In 1947, Gomulka's views, denying the existence of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union, were a heresy in the eyes of Moscow. In 1961, this once heretical thesis became the official Soviet point of view since it is now asserted that the dictatorship of the proletariat "has fulfilled its historic mission and has ceased to be indispensable in the USSR from the point of view of the tasks of internal development." "The Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (draft), 1961," in *The Communist Blueprint for the Future*, pp. 191-92.

37. Gomulka, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

In Czechoslovakia, Klement Gottwald also stressed that his country was following a different path to socialism. In his lecture to the Communist Party functionaries on July 9, 1945, Gottwald declared:

In our republic, we are going through a specific development which cannot be squeezed into any pattern, and in the course of which we must seek our own paths, our own methods, our own Czech and Slovak policy. The conclusion is: our regime is a regime of a national and democratic revolution, a regime of a specific Czechoslovak type...³⁸

He defined the specific "Czechoslovak path" in the following statement:

In the rebuilding of our society and in the construction of the new, people's democratic republic we have followed our own specific Czechoslovak path. Its specific feature consists in the fact that the people from town and country, united in the National Front through their gigantic numerical strength, both political and moral, have succeeded in removing the former power holders from their privileged positions.³⁹

On another occasion, he made it unmistakably clear that neither the dictatorship of the proletariat nor the soviet system were necessary in Czechoslovakia. In his report to the Central Executive Committee of the Party on October 24, 1946, Gottwald said the following:

As experience had shown, and as we were taught by the classics of Marxism-Leninism, there is not only one single road toward socialism, the road of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the soviets. Under a certain constellation of external and internal forces another path to socialism is possible... This applies also to us.

And further,

It is necessary to bear in mind that the means by which the Soviet Union reached socialism are not the only possibility...⁴⁰

A new type of democracy was created which we call people's democracy. What the classics of Marxism have anticipated in theory, namely, that there is another path to socialism than via dictatorship of the proletariat and the soviet state form, was proved here in practice. This path is being followed by Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Poland and Czechoslovakia.⁴¹

How sincere Gottwald was in this pronouncement is difficult to say. It seems more probable that his utterances were merely dictated by strategic motives, and did not indicate any policy independent from Moscow, as was, in fact, confirmed later (1955) by official sources:

The national and democratic revolution [in Czechoslovakia] was a spring-board for the socialist revolution. From its very beginning it contained important socialist elements, such as the hegemony of the proletariat and the leading position of the Communist Party in the government. The first socialist changes took place immediately after the liberation. The Party decidedly

38. Klement Gottwald, *Deset Let: Sborník statí a projevů*, 1936-1946, (Praha: Svoboda, 1946), p. 292.

39. Klement Gottwald, *1946-1948*, (Praha: Svoboda, 1949), II, p. 30.

40. Gottwald, *Deset Let*, p. 366.

41. *Ibid.*, p. 367.

condemned all leftist efforts to skip the national and democratic stage of the revolution and to aim directly at a socialist revolution; at the same time, it opposed the opportunistic tendency to leave the leadership to the bourgeoisie. By correct political orientation, strategy, and tactics, the Communist Party was able to win the broad masses of the people for the solution of the national and democratic tasks of the revolution. Its realization created the conditions for a transition of the national and democratic revolution into a socialist revolution.⁴²

This applies more or less to all communist leaders in Eastern Europe whose past pronouncements suggested an intention of pursuing an independent course. Without any doubt, they all were convinced communists, who hardly intended to antagonize Moscow to whom they owed their very power positions. At the same time, however, they recognized the importance of the broad base of power provided by the popular front coalitions, and were afraid of economic repercussions to which a disruption of the coalition would inevitably lead. The talk about an independent road toward socialism (there was very little action which would indicate in a decisive way any real independence from the Moscow line) was due to the conviction, of some communist leaders in Eastern Europe, that Moscow tacitly approved, or at least did not object to, a different course of development in the people's democracies.

Doctrinal Uniformity: Georgi Dimitrov

The era of the "specific path to socialism" in Eastern Europe did not last long. The new, official, doctrine of people's democracy, binding upon all Soviet satellites, was enunciated by Georgi Dimitrov, the Bulgarian communist leader, in his report to the Fifth Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party on December 19, 1948. It should be pointed out, however, that the new theory of the people's democracy was outlined a few months prior to Dimitrov's famous speech by E. S. Lazutkin who asserted that the people's democracies and the Soviet state were basically identical, both being forms of a dictatorship of the proletariat.⁴³

According to Dimitrov, the people's democratic state, embodying the rule of the toiling masses under the leadership of the working class, performs the functions of the dictatorship of the proletariat for the purpose of liquidating the capitalist elements and organizing a socialist economy.⁴⁴

42. "Deset let lidové demokratického Československa, 1945-1955," *Nová mysl*, No. 5 (May, 1955), p. 405.

43. E. S. Lazutkin in "O nedostatkakh i zadachakh nauchno issledovatel'skoi raboty v oblasti ekonomiki," *Voprosy ekonomiki*, No. 9 (1948), pp. 102-108.

44. Georgi Dimitrov, *Ausgewählte Schriften* (Berlin: Dietz, 1958), Bd. 3, 1935-1948, pp. 596-602. English translation of Dimitrov's speech in his *Selected Speeches and Articles*, with an introduction by Harry Pollitt. (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1951), pp. 233-37.

Dimitrov played down the customary emphasis on the uniqueness of the people's democratic path to socialism and rebuked some comrades who were inclined to over-emphasize the distinctions between the people's democracies and the existing Soviet regime. Stressing the essential identity between the Soviet state and people's democracy, he said:

According to Marxism-Leninism, the Soviet regime and the people's democratic regime are two forms of one and the same rule, the rule of the working class in alliance with and at the head of the toilers from towns and villages. They are two forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The particular form of transition from capitalism to socialism in our country does not and cannot change the fundamental laws for the transition period from capitalism to socialism which are identical in all countries. The transition to socialism cannot be carried out without the dictatorship of the proletariat directed against the capitalist elements and aimed at organizing of socialist economy.⁴⁵

Dimitrov acknowledged the theoretical advice of the Bolshevik Party of the Soviet Union in general and of Stalin in particular. This was a sufficient proof that the new theory had Stalin's official placet and, as could be expected, the leaders of other East European communist parties followed suit. Speeches reiterating this doctrine were made by Bierut, Rákosi, Révai, Slánský and others in the customarily uniform manner.⁴⁶ Shortly after Dimitrov's official formulation of the theory, a number of studies discussing the character of the new regimes in Eastern Europe appeared in the USSR, among them a book by N. P. Farberov, *Gosudarstvennoe pravo stran narodnoi demokratii* (The Government of the People's Democracies), which was approved by the Ministry of Higher Education as a text-book for the law faculties of the Soviet universities.

Farberov's text-book was published in the fall of 1949, well after the official doctrine had been firmly established. Farberov rejected as entirely erroneous the opinions expressed earlier by Trainin, Varga, and others, who tried to interpret the people's democracies as a third type of government, neither capitalistic nor socialistic. According to Farberov, people's democracy was a socialist form of government. The fact that the popular democracies had a system of mixed economy in no way affected their socialist character, since the decisive element which determined the political character of the people's democracies was their class structure, the rule of the toiling masses and the dominant role of the socialist sector of the economy.⁴⁷

45. Dimitrov, *Ausgewählte Schriften*, Bd. 3, p. 649.

46. It has been noted that no statement with respect to the new theory of people's democracy was made by Gottwald in Czechoslovakia, nor had his earlier views as to the distinctive Czechoslovak path to socialism been criticized or called deviationist. Gordon Skilling, "People's Democracy, the Proletarian Dictatorship, and the Czechoslovak Path to Socialism," *American-Slavic and East-European Review*, x No. 2 (April, 1951), p. 114.

47. N. P. Farberov, *Gosudarstvennoe pravo stran narodnoi demokratii* (Moskva: Gospolizdat, 1949), p. 5-6.

The communist scholars writing during this period were all united in the view that the people's democratic state was a state of a socialist type, and that the revolution which culminated in the creation of the people's democratic state was a socialist revolution. The new democracies were identified with the dictatorship of the proletariat similar to that already established in the Soviet Union.

While the emphasis during the pre-1948 period was on differences separating the people's democracies from the Soviet Union, the trend now was on identification. The writers of this period still recognized that there were differences between the people's democracies and the Soviet Union, but they limited them strictly to non-essentials. It was admitted that the people's democracies may have possessed certain original features in "methods, means, forms and tempos of movement," but they were regarded only as a "variant and not a denial of the common road itself." The specific features of the people's democracies were attributed to the "differences in historical development, in the degree of economic and cultural development, and in the concrete disposition of the class forces." This concession of diversity had a strictly limited scope. It was emphasized that the path toward socialism followed by the countries of the people's democracy remained within the general framework of the transitional period in accordance with the principles laid down by the Marxist-Leninist theory of the state and traversed by the Soviet Union itself.⁴⁸

The people's democracies were defined by Farberov as "states of the toiling classes headed by the working class, states which represent the transitional stage from capitalism to socialism, states of a new, socialist type,"⁴⁹ identical in their class character, objectives and tasks with the Soviet state in the first phase, from which they differed only in form.⁵⁰

Mankovskii described the people's democracies as "states of the transition from capitalism to socialism, states in which socialism is being built."⁵¹ They were regarded as governments of a socialist type in view of their class character and political form. While the Soviet state represented a form of transition from socialism to communism, the people's democratic state was a form of transition from capitalism to socialism. According to Mankovskii, the people's democratic revolution was a socialist revolution which carried out the same historical tasks as the Soviet socialist revolution in Russia, and the fact that the people's democratic state had to perform many

48. Farberov, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 31.

51. B. S. Mankovskii, *Narodno-demokraticheskie respubliky iugovostochnoi Evropy* (Moskva: Pravda, 1950). The present study refers to the Slovak translation of the above work which was published under the title *Ludovo-demokratické republiky, štáty socialistického typu* (Bratislava: Tatran, 1951), p. 11.

bourgeois-democratic tasks, such as the liquidation of the remnants of feudalism and enactment of an agrarian reform, changed nothing in the socialist nature of the revolution.⁵² It was a socialist revolution because the working class and the toiling masses of the peasantry were its decisive forces which alone determined the character of the revolution. Mankovskii also branded as "erroneous and anti-Marxist" the views expressed by some authors that the people's democratic revolution was bourgeois-democratic.⁵³

Soviet writers of this period, following Dimitrov's official formulation of the theory, regarded the people's democratic state as a proletarian dictatorship:

The decisive point in determining the essence of the state is not the mere form of the political organization, but its content which forms its flesh and blood. The content of the people's democracy is the dictatorship of the proletariat.⁵⁴

Or:

According to the Marx-Leninist doctrine, the state during the transitional period from capitalism to socialism cannot be anything else but a revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.⁵⁵

The most important feature of the people's democratic state was seen in its partial preservation of a parliamentary form, with a number of political parties united in a coalition. It was asserted that the existence of other political parties besides the communist party in a people's democracy in no way affected the nature of the dictatorship of the proletariat because the decisive characteristics of the new governmental form was the leading role of the working class, represented by its "vanguard," the communist party. Within this multi-class coalition, a close alliance of the working class with the peasantry was said to be the very backbone of the government of a people's democracy. Both the Soviet state and the people's democratic state were regarded as governments of the same type.⁵⁶

Despite the emphasis on the essential identity of the two forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Soviet scholars were exceedingly anxious to emphasize the ideological primacy of the Soviet Union. It was stressed

52. B. S. Mankovskii, "Novyi etap v razvitii narodno-demokraticeskikh gosudarstv kak gosudarstv sotsialisticheskogo tipa," *Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo*, No. 7 (1950), p. 1. Cf. also P. F. Iudin, "Na putiakh perekhoda k sotsializmu v stranakh narodnoi demokratii," *Voprosy filosofii*, No. 1 (1949), pp. 44-45.

53. B. S. Mankovskii, "Klassovaia sushchnost narodno-demokraticeskogo gosudarstva," *Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo*, No. 6 (1949), p. 7.

54. Farberov, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

55. B. S. Mankovskii, *Narodno-demokraticheskie respubliky iugovostochnoi Evropy*, Slovak translation, p. 11.

56. P. K. Figurnov, "Perekhodnyi period ot kapitalizma k sotsializmu v evropeiskikh stranakh narodnoi demokratii," *Voprosy filosofii*, No. 1 (1950), p. 82.

that the countries of a people's democracy survived as socialist states without adopting the soviet form only because they had the support of the Soviet Union:

The Soviet state, as Lenin and Stalin have proved, has been and will remain a higher form of a socialist government. However, the peculiar situation in which the dictatorship of the proletariat in the countries of people's democracy was established, the relationship of the class forces in those countries, and the degree of political maturity of the toiling masses as well as the relationship of the forces of socialism and imperialism in the world and the forms of the struggle for socialism in other countries and, finally, the leading role of the Soviet Union, have created conditions for establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat in a different form, that of people's democracy. This special form of the revolutionary power proved capable of carrying out the functions of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of handling the problems of the transitional period between capitalism and socialism thanks to the existence and assistance of the Soviet socialist government.⁵⁷

In accordance with the official tendency to emphasize common features between the Soviet state and the people's democratic states, the people's democratic revolution was pictured as something comparable to the October Revolution in Russia, a new type of revolution with a strongly pronounced anti-capitalist character, thus resembling more a proletarian-socialist than a bourgeois-democratic revolution.

The official enunciation of the theory of people's democracy by Dimitrov in 1948 fulfilled the essential task of creating a uniform pattern of political system in Eastern Europe. The theory, however, had all the signs of a hasty improvisation. This was perhaps inevitable in order to combat without delay the Yugoslav threat to the unity of the communist bloc. The subsequent changes in the doctrine were designed to bring it closer to the Marxist-Leninist theory of the state, and to introduce refinements for the purpose of making the theory better adaptable to various new situations in accordance with the needs of the Soviet foreign policy. The new theory was proposed by Aleksandr Ivanovich Sobolev who first formulated his views in a lecture delivered in 1951, and subsequently published in the *Bolshevik*, No. 19, October, 1951. His theory of people's democracy was adopted, in essence, by the official Soviet reference books, such as *Bolshaia Sovetskaiia Entsiklopedia*, *Kratkii Filosofskii Slovar*, *Politicheskii Slovar*, *Fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism*, as well as by the official textbook of political economy issued by the Institute of Economics of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR.⁵⁸ The new theory was based on the original Marxist sequence of bourgeois-democratic and proletarian-socialist revolutions, on the notion of the two-stage development originally laid down in the *Communist Man-*

57. D. I. Chesnokov, "Lenin i Stalin o gosudarstvennoi forme diktatury proletariata," *Voprosy filosofii*, No. 3 (1948), p. 62.

58. It was generally believed that his formulation of the doctrine had Stalin's personal approval. Ivan Bystrina, "Proti dogmatickému výkladu vzniku lidové demokratického zřízení v Československu," *Nová mysl*, No. 2 (únor 1957), p. 148.

ifesto, and on the concept of an indissoluble link between the two revolutions formulated by Lenin.

The major deficiency of Sobolev's theory of people's democracy derives from its indiscriminate application to countries which differed among themselves in social and economic structure. Yet, despite its faults, the theory was flexible enough to comprise Communist China and other states of Asia as well as the European satellites of the Soviet Union. It also was broad enough to include other states in different stages of transition.

Latest Pattern: National Democracy and Popular Front Governments

With the attention of the Soviet Union turned more and more toward countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, it became necessary for the Soviet leaders to devise a new governmental form fitting the particular local conditions of these countries. The developments in the Soviet theory of people's democracy following the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union already indicated a trend toward a doctrinal acceptance of broad coalition governments as a stepping-stone for a gradual transition to socialism. Sobolev's thesis of the feasibility of a dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of a parliamentary republic as well as the resolutions of the Twentieth Congress represented another step toward more flexibility in the doctrine, designed to make it applicable to a wider range of countries. Nevertheless, people's democracy was already too closely associated with communism to be of any use for the governmental form of the newly independent countries of Asia and Africa. A new name, if not quite a new concept, was finally found at the Meeting of the 81 Communist Parties in Moscow, November-December 1960. The form of government, specially designed for the developing countries was called "national democracy," a kind of a coalition government in which the communists hope to exercise a strong influence, and which is supposed to bypass the capitalist stage of development as did earlier the People's Republic of Mongolia. Moreover, it seems that the Soviet Union, in its quest for extending the frontiers of communist power as its long-term objective, would now be satisfied with a simple popular front coalitions in certain countries where a communist revolution appears unlikely at the present time. The need for a revolution during the transition from capitalism to socialism, and the inevitability of the stage of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the period of socialist construction, has been reasserted, at least in theory, in the Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union adopted by the Twenty-second Congress in October-November, 1961.

The Soviet theory of people's democracy is a result of a long period of development during which earlier formulations were subjected to sharp

criticism and replaced by new ones, better adapted to current Soviet needs. The concept of people's democracy was fitted into the established pattern of the Marxist-Leninist state, a procedure that often presented considerable difficulties. The Soviet theory of the state is a closed doctrine. As an analysis and rationalization of political developments in Eastern Europe, the present theory of people's democracy appears inadequate if not entirely absurd. The resistance movements in Eastern Europe during and at the close of World War II were based solely on the idea of a common opposition to the Germans. Problems of economic determinism formulated in terms of a class struggle against the remnants of feudalism were totally absent from the minds of those who fought against the Nazi rule in Eastern Europe. The people's democratic regimes were established in Eastern Europe not by means of an independent local revolutionary action but under a direct or indirect assistance of the Soviet armies. Not even the Yugoslav communists were entirely without at least a psychological assistance of the Red Army, although, on the whole, they won power through their own means. As a guide to action, the theory of people's democracy was not of much use in the establishment of the communist controlled regimes over Eastern Europe simply because it was formulated considerably later, after these regimes had been firmly established in power. The concept of people's democracy in Eastern Europe can serve merely as a rationale of the authoritarian and totalitarian regimes in that area, and as an ideological explanation of their dependence on the Soviet Union. The present purpose of the theory of people's democracy in Eastern Europe is to bring about a gradual consolidation of the communist regimes in that part of the world along the lines followed earlier by the Soviet Union, and to ensure Soviet ideological and political primacy. For Eastern Europe, people's democracy has largely concluded its role. At present, the communists have turned their attention from economically advanced countries to the underdeveloped territories of the world. The theory of the people's democratic revolution has been revised primarily for this particular reason. It still uses the standard clichés of economic determinism; it still speaks of bourgeois-democratic revolutions, but its bourgeois-democratic revolution is not a mere anti-feudal revolution in the classical Marxist sense. It is an "anti-imperialist" revolution, aimed against the "imperialists," *i.e.*, against everyone who appears to be opposed to the communist interests and designs. The theory of people's democracy still could become a program of action designed to convert the emerging nations into communist societies through proposing methods for this conversion and offering slogans capable of evoking powerful sentiments of the masses which the communists hope to manipulate for their own ends.

CHAPTER II

REVOLUTION BY SUCCESSIVE STAGES REVISITED

The extent of the political, social and economic changes which took place in Eastern Europe at the close of World War II amounted to a major revolution. Whole layers of the population were dispossessed and removed from the exercise of their former political and economic power or, at least, their influence was greatly diminished. These far-reaching changes occurred rather smoothly, without a large-scale outbreak of violence, without a civil war. The transformation was carried out mostly by a government action, in the presence of the Soviet armies or, at least, within their reach. Some postwar governments in Eastern Europe committed themselves to a vast program of revolutionary changes a long time before the liberation of their countries. The "revolution" was brought about by decrees of the respective governments set up in the wake of the collapse of the German occupying forces. This "institutionalization" of the revolution was particularly remarkable in Czechoslovakia where the Czechoslovak government-in-exile had accepted the revolution even before it returned to the liberated country.¹

After a brief period of confusion which surrounded the concept of people's democracy in the immediate post-World War II period, the Soviet leaders became acutely aware of the necessity to provide a suitable theoretical framework for the governmental form of Russia's satellites in Eastern Europe. At a time when Stalin could manipulate the world's communist parties as he chose, the problem presented no particular difficulties, at least in theory. As long as the formulation of theory remained in the hands of a closed group which wielded a monopoly of power, the Soviet leaders were relatively free to adapt the doctrine of the revolution in the pursuit of practical goals, to drop certain tenets of theory as expendable or to shift emphasis if the doctrine happened to conflict with immediate demands of the leadership. On the whole, however, the appearance of consistency had to be preserved. Too much in the communist system depends on certain ideological conceptions, and there is a vested interest in having certain tenets appear immutable and absolute. A consistent and rather stable ideology is a prerequisite for the cohesion of the communist world. For that reason, the entire concept of people's democracy had to be adapted to the overall system of ideas to which the communist leaders were committed. The method

1. Samuel L. Sharp, *New Constitutions in the Soviet Sphere*, (Washington: Foundation for Foreign Affairs, 1950), p. 14.

by which the communist-controlled regimes were established in Eastern Europe could hardly be explained merely in terms of an intensified class struggle. When it became apparent that the lack of an officially recognized theory would lead to a disintegrating trend among Moscow's satellites, a doctrinal explanation of this stage of development became necessary not only for the sake of an ideological and institutional uniformity but in the interest of the political cohesion of the bloc as well.

Although Dimitrov's doctrine of people's democracy effectively stopped a too liberal interpretation of the theoretical foundation of the new regimes which prevailed during the brief span of an officially tolerated institutional diversity in Eastern Europe, it was too crude, and obviously unsuitable to include political systems like that of Communist China.

The decisive change in the concept was introduced in 1951 by Aleksander Ivanovich Sobolev in his lecture on the nature of people's democracy.² His formulation of the theory of the people's democratic revolution was a strict adaptation of the classical Marxist-Leninist concept of revolution by successive stages to a new situation. According to Sobolev, the people's democratic revolution was twofold: it was an "anti-imperialist," "anti-fascist," revolution, directed against the oppression of the people by German fascism. At the same time, it was an "anti-feudal" revolution, directed against "feudal" survivals in the economic as well as in the political system.³ Sobolev kept his doctrine of people's democracy strictly within the established Marxist-Leninist categories. Since the people's democratic revolution was of a "bourgeois-democratic" nature, it had to behave as such, that is, it had to aim at creating a "bourgeois-democratic" order through destroying "feudalism." It had to ignore "socialist" task, such as an overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. By definition, it had to be essentially "anti-feudal," with the main task to abolish "feudalism." Even its "anti-fascist" nature had to be viewed as an aspect of "feudalism." In this interpretation, fascism was merely an "extreme stage of political reaction in the epoch of imperialism" which was willing to leave feudal survivals intact in order to save the "decaying, imperialist system."⁴

An attempt to apply the concept of the revolution by successive stage to the actual developments in Eastern Europe and Asia created considerable difficulties. The idea of the sequence of the two revolutions was formulated by Marx in his *Communist Manifesto*. The first of the two revolutions, the bourgeois revolution, would overthrow the feudal order and political

2. A. I. Sobolev, "Narodnaia demokratiia kak forma politicheskoi organizatsii obshchestva," obrabotannaia stenogramma lektsii pročitannoi v partkabinete МК i МОК ВКР(б). *Bolshevik*, xx viii, No. 19 (Oktiabr, 1951), pp. 25-38.

3. Sobolev, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-28. Cf. also his *People's Democracy, A New Form of Political Organization of Society* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1954), pp. 36-37.

4. Sobolev, *People's Democracy*, p. 37.

absolutism, establish bourgeois democracy and a capitalist system of production.⁵ Under the favorable conditions provided by bourgeois democracy, the proletariat would organize itself and finally would overthrow bourgeois capitalism in a revolution. Marx predicted that, in Germany, the bourgeois revolution there would be immediately followed by a proletarian revolution.⁶

For Russia, which had not yet reached the bourgeois-democratic stage, Lenin thought of the same scheme that Marx predicted for Germany. His theory of revolution for Russia was elaborated mainly in two works, *The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats*, (1898), and *Two Tactics of Social Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*, (1905). In the first work, Lenin pointed out that the object of the practical activities of the Social Democrats was "to lead the class struggle of the proletariat and to organize that struggle in both its manifestations: socialist (the struggle against the capitalist class for the purpose of destroying the class system and organizing socialist society), and democratic (the fight against absolutism, for the purpose of winning political liberty for Russia and for the democratization of the political and social system in Russia).⁷ Although he insisted on the theoretical separation of the two revolutions, he was equally convinced that there was an "inseparable link" between the bourgeois-democratic and the socialist revolutions. He realized that in the struggle for socialism, the proletariat was practically alone. The situation appeared to him much more favorable where the struggle against tsarist absolutism was concerned, in which the proletariat would have an important ally in the bourgeoisie and in "all the political opposition elements, strata of the population, and classes which are hostile to absolutism." He urged the Social-Democrats, to ally themselves with other elements opposed to absolutism, and to "put socialism in the background for the time being."⁸ While Lenin fully accepted, for Russia, Marx's scheme for Germany, and while he agreed that Russia had to traverse a period of bourgeois-democratic development, he assigned the leading role in the bourgeois-democratic revolution to the proletariat rather than to the bourgeoisie.

He regarded the bourgeois revolution as absolutely necessary in the interests of the proletariat, but insisted that the proletariat must complete the bourgeois-democratic revolution alone because the bourgeoisie was "incapable of being consistently democratic," and would betray the cause of liberty.⁹

5. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1951), 1, pp. 34-38.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 61.

7. V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952), 1, Part 1, p. 178.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 184.

9. I. Lenin, "Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution," *Selected Works*, 1, Part 2, p. 49.

Lenin was aware that during the bourgeois-democratic stage, the proletariat would not be strong enough to establish its exclusive class dictatorship, but would have to enter into an alliance with other classes, especially the peasantry, which, too, would be interested in the overthrow of absolutism and feudalism. The victory would result in the establishment not yet of a dictatorship of the proletariat but of a "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry."¹⁰ As Lenin put it, this revolution would proceed in the "Jacobin" or "plebeian" way, "ruthlessly destroying the enemies of liberty, crushing their resistance by force, making no concessions whatever to the accursed heritage of serfdom, of Asiatic barbarian and human degradation."¹¹ Nevertheless, the joint dictatorship of the proletariat and of the peasantry would still confine itself strictly to democratic tasks without touching the foundations of capitalism, and would not "directly overstep the bounds of bourgeois social and economic relationships."¹²

Lenin predicted that, once the victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution was achieved, the proletariat would proceed to the second stage of the revolution, the proletarian-socialist revolution. Here, too, the proletariat would need an ally; but this time it would not be the peasantry as a whole, but its semi-proletarian elements only. In an italicized passage Lenin said:

*The proletariat must carry to completion the democratic revolution, by allying to itself the mass of the peasantry in order to crush by force the resistance of the autocracy and to paralyze the instability of the bourgeoisie. The proletariat must accomplish the socialist revolution, by allying to itself the mass of the semi-proletarian elements of the population in order to crush by the resistance of the bourgeoisie and to paralyze the instability of the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie.*¹³

Therefore, tactics of the revolutionary Social-Democrats in the revolution had to be:

At the head of the whole people, and particularly of the peasantry—for complete freedom, for a consistent democratic revolution, for a republic! At the head of all the toilers and the exploited—for socialism!¹⁴

This sequence of the two revolutions served Sobolev and others as a model for the theory of the people's democratic revolution. Needless to say the classical pattern of a revolution by successive stages as predicted by Marx and Lenin never materialized. Lenin, as a practical revolutionary, had to deal with workers and peasants as they were and not as they were expected to be. In fact, the attitude of the workers in the 1905 uprising proved to

10. I. Lenin, "Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution," *Selected Works*, 1, Part 2, p. 50.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 59.

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 107.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 121.

Lenin that the working class solidarity was a myth. He soon realized that the essential task was to pursue political power regardless of the lack of support on the part of the workers and peasants. Since the workers were not ready to act in conformity with Marx's predictions, Lenin substituted the Communist Party as a chosen instrument capable of carrying out the historical task of the proletariat. Instead of the mass of industrial workers assisted by the peasantry, Lenin employed a conspiratorial elite which sought power on a minority basis *in the name of* the proletariat.

Lenin's prescription and practice proved to be of considerable significance in the theoretical evaluation of the communist or communist controlled regimes in Eastern Europe. The political system which emerged in those countries was based on political power rather than on Marx's economic determinism. While the theory of the people's democratic revolution still continued to pay lip service to the economic factor, the communist leaders knew only too well that the behavior of societies did not depend exclusively on economic considerations. It is significant that the categories which were borrowed from the arsenal of Marxism-Leninism to form the essence of the theory of people's democracy were those primarily concerned with the strategy of the seizure of power.

As noted, the people's democratic revolution consists of two social revolutions. The first, the bourgeois revolution, has been defined as a "social revolution whose historical task is to renew the harmony between the relations of production and the forces of production on the basis of capitalism."¹⁵

Communist writers distinguish between the bourgeois and bourgeois-democratic revolutions.¹⁶ Both revolutions consist of the seizure of power

15. J. Houška and K. Kára, *Otázky lidové demokracie* (Praha: Státní nakl. politické literatury, 1955), p. 31.

16. The term "bourgeoisie" is to be understood in the same sense as used by Marx and defined by Engels, denoting "the class of modern capitalists, owners of the means of social production and employers of wage labor." (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, I, p. 33). It means the propertied class as opposed to propertyless proletariat. Property here means business, factories, industrial and financial capital. When the communist writers speak of the bourgeois revolution, they mean "bourgeoisie" in this sense rather than "bourgeoisie" in the present communist usage in which the term was extended to include "all those who, whether they possess capital or not, have an interest in preserving the capitalist system which makes them opponents of communism, and who develop an ideology which, for all its pretensions, is no more than the expression of this interest." (R. N. Carew Hunt, *A Guide to Communist Jargon*. New York: Macmillan, 1957, pp. 6-7). Similarly, the term "proletariat" is to be understood in the restricted sense, namely, denoting essentially a class of industrial workers. The Marxists distinguish between the proletariat (or, the working class, as it is called in the USSR since the adoption of the Constitution of 1936), and the toiling masses which may include proletarian, semi-proletarian, small bourgeois and agrarian elements. (*Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*. New York, 1949, XI-XII, p. 150). In the present usage, the proletariat has been largely identified with the communist party itself (Hunt, *op. cit.*, p. 33). The Roman origin of the

by the bourgeoisie from the feudal power holders (including monarchy), abolition of the feudal system, and establishing of a capitalist system. The basic criterion for distinguishing these two forms is the different character of the driving forces of the respective revolutions.¹⁷ The characteristic feature of the bourgeois-democratic revolution is the participation of the "broad masses of the people" and the "leadership of the bourgeoisie." The communist writers point out that, despite the fact that broad masses of the people often were the main driving force of the revolution, they have never been able to benefit from it in the past, because the bourgeoisie always betrayed the revolution by compromising with the feudal aristocracy. The French Revolution of 1789 is regarded as a classical example of such a revolution, because the masses of the working people, who were its driving force, merely "instituted the economic and political privileges of the bourgeoisie," while they themselves "were deprived of all political and social

term "proletariat" according to which *proletarius* meant the class of citizens whose contribution to the republic was merely its *proles*, i.e., children, is reflected in the pejorative definition contained in the *Handbüchlein für Wühler; oder, Kurzgefasste Anleitung in wenigen Tagen ein Volksmann zu werden*, by Peter Struwel (Leipzig: G. Mayer, 1848). The definition reads as follows: "Die Proletarier—eigentlich ein ganz unanständiger Ausdruck, und bedeutet Jeden, der zwar Erben producirt, aber sonst nichts," (p. 34). As a rule, the definitions of the concept "proletariat" are much broader than Marx's and Engels' interpretation, e.g., L. von Stein defined the term as "die Klasse derer, die weder Bildung noch Eigentum als Basis ihrer Geltung im gesellschaftlichen Leben besitzen und sich dennoch nicht berufen fühlen, ganz ohne jene Güter zu bleiben, die der Persönlichkeit erst ihren Wert verleihen." (L. von Stein, *Der Sozialismus und Kommunismus des heutigen Frankreichs*, quoted in Karl Diehl, *Die Diktatur des Proletariats und das Räte-system* (Jena: G. Fischer, 1920), p. 8.

In one of the more recent studies of the proletariat, the term was defined as follows: "Le proletariat, dans le sens moderne de ce mot, se compose des travailleurs libres et intellectuels, dépourvus de propriété, ainsi que privés du capital nécessaire à l'installation d'une propre entreprise, par conséquent, obligés, pour gagner leur vie, de vendre leur force-travail à l'entrepreneur pour le prix, nommé le salaire, dont le montant très réduit, ne donne aucune possibilité d'épargne, de sorte qu'ils doivent rester avec leurs familles, dans l'état du salariat permanent et héréditaire." Romuald Zaniewski, *L'origine du proletariat romain et contemporain; faits et théories* (Louvain: Editions Nauwelaerts, 1957), p. 328.

The almost complete absence of the proletariat proper in some developing countries forces the communists to enlarge this category by adding other strata close to the proletariat, such as the "semi-proletariat," e.g., workers who own a piece of land or a workshop which alone would not suffice to provide means of livelihood. Moreover, the communists are willing to include also the so-called "Lumpen-proletariat," such as "persons without employment, bandits, gamblers (card-players), etc.," which they accept as a revolutionary force provided that they can be "educated and given a more close attention." *Cahiers de Gamboma*, No. 1, 2. leçon (January 13, 1965) in *Ostprobleme*, XVIII, No. 20 (Oct. 7, 1966), p. 620. See p. 169 *infra*.

17. Houška and Kára, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

rights.”¹⁸ It is similarly asserted, that the American Revolution in which small farmers exercised a decisive influence and workers played an important role, ended in a victory of the bourgeoisie and “laid the basis for a rapid growth of the capitalist order in the United States.”¹⁹

In the Marxist theory, the character or type of revolution is determined solely by what social aims it realizes, what contradictions it resolves, and what socio-economic system it establishes. A revolution which was directed against feudalism and which established bourgeois capitalist system is viewed as a bourgeois, or bourgeois-democratic, revolution. This, however, is said to apply only to the stage of the so-called pre-monopoly capitalism, but is no longer applicable in the age of imperialism. About 1916, Lenin, to whom Marxism never represented a rigid dogma but rather a method of analyzing the actual situation, thought it necessary to explain why Marx's law of increasing misery of the workers had not yet materialized, why the revolution had not yet taken place in the industrialized capitalist countries, and why the capitalist system still persisted in spite of all its contradictions. In his work, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, Lenin asserted that at the beginning of the 20th century capitalism had entered its imperialist period, its last stage before the final collapse. Under imperialism, Lenin explained, capitalism escaped self-destruction by expanding on an international scale as a result of its search for raw materials, new markets and cheap labor force. Transferred to a global level, capitalism has become a world system in which the individual countries are only links in a single chain. The doctrine of imperialism proved to be an exceedingly convenient device which enabled Lenin to assert that, under imperialism, the proletarian revolution would occur not necessarily in the most advanced capitalist countries where the proletariat constitutes the majority of the population, but rather in economically backward countries which are the “weakest link in the chain of world imperialism.” This theory had important consequences for the contemporary Marxist-Leninist theory of the revolution. The communists now assert that, under imperialism, the bourgeoisie always allies itself with reactionary forces, and uses the very survivals of feudalism for its own benefit to remain in power, and therefore cannot carry out sincerely and consistently any revolution against the remains of feudalism. Thus if feudalism is to be defeated, the revolution must be aimed against imperialism as well, a task which cannot be undertaken by the bourgeoisie with their vested interest in the preservation of the imperialist system. At

18. Albert Soboul, 1789 (Paris: Editions sociales internationales, 1939), p. 295. The “masses” in the French Revolution were by no means drawn from identical social groups, through the *sans-culottes*, i.e., workshop masters, craftsmen, shopkeepers and petty traders constituted an overwhelming majority. Cf. George Rudé, *The Crowds in the French Revolution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), pp. 178-79.

19. William Z. Foster, *Outline Political History of the Americas* (New York: International Publishers, 1951), p. 134.

this point, the Marxists claim, *only the proletariat can take over the leadership* in a revolution. The proletarian revolution succeeds the bourgeois revolution *immediately*, or, in other words, the bourgeois revolution "grows into" the proletarian revolution. The proletariat becomes here the "hegemon" of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, and carries out the struggle "against feudal survivals and imperialist oppression."²⁰ Under the conditions of imperialism, the communists assert, (and this is necessary to keep in mind if the whole concept of the people's democratic revolution is to be understood), the bourgeois democratic revolution contains "more and more of socialist elements," and the proletariat, allied with other classes in the bourgeois-democratic revolution, would be able to achieve a position of hegemony even in such countries where it still constitutes only a minority.²¹ Moreover, according to the Marxists, the crisis of capitalism became even more aggravated after World War I, because the October Revolution "inflicted a mortal wound on world capitalism from which the latter will never recover."²²

According to the Marxian analysis, the people's democratic revolution, in its bourgeois-democratic stage, has certain peculiar features which can be briefly summarized as follows:

- (1) The revolution is carried out under the leadership, or "hegemony," of the proletariat, who brings its own means of revolutionary struggle and gives to the revolution its specific imprint.
- (2) The peasantry, instead of supporting the bourgeoisie in the revolution, becomes a "reserve" of the proletariat.
- (3) The bourgeois revolution becomes a component part of the world-wide proletarian revolution. This phenomenon is particularly apparent in various liberation movements which instead of being isolated, independent, actions, unconnected with the general problems of capitalism and imperialism, are regarded as an international problem, "a world problem of emancipating the oppressed peoples in the dependent countries and colonies from the yoke of imperialism."²³ This aspect of the revolution links together, at least as far as the underdeveloped countries are concerned, two phenomena thus far regarded as incompatible in orthodox Marxism, nationalism and Marxist socialism.
- (4) Bourgeois-democratic revolutions of this stage are carried out in the presence of an already existing "powerful and open centre of the world

20. Akademiia nauk sssr. Institut ekonomiki, *Political Economy* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1957), p. 330.

21. Ivan Bystřina, *Lidová demokracie* (Praha: Československá Akademie Věd, 1957, p. 98.

22. Stalin, "International Character of the October Revolution," *Problems of Leninism*, pp. 242-243.

23. Stalin, "Foundation of Leninism," *Problems of Leninism*, p. 71. Cf. also Mao Tse-Tung, "On New Democracy," in his *Selected Works* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1954), III, p. 115.

revolutionary movement" which serves as a rallying point for all revolutions.²⁴ In other words, the revolutionaries all over the world, regardless of the kind of revolution they are pursuing, can now expect a support from Moscow if their revolution happens to coincide with Russian interests. This support was called by a Marxist author a "revolution from above projected on an international scale."²⁵

(5) At this stage, the bourgeoisie cannot carry out any democratic revolution at all. It is therefore up to the proletariat to determine who is to assume the political power in the state, and to decide the further course of the revolution. As distinct from the former bourgeois revolution, the bourgeois revolution under the hegemony of the proletariat would not establish a mere bourgeois republic, but would create a new form, called "the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry" (Lenin), or, perhaps something broader than that, such as "the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the people" (Mao Tse-tung). The leadership by the proletariat in the bourgeois-democratic revolution does not yet mean an exclusive rule of the proletariat. The essential task of the proletariat under the joint dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry is to "emancipate" the peasantry from the influence of the bourgeois parties, to bring about a political isolation of the bourgeoisie, and to prepare for a forcible overthrow of capitalism. Supported by the peasantry and the radical sections of the bourgeoisie, the proletariat would finally overthrow the bourgeois government, and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat as an exclusive class dictatorship, distinct from the former multi-class dictatorship under the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry (or of the people) in which, theoretically at least, other classes than the proletariat had their share in the government.

(6) Economically, the basis of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in the period of the general crisis of capitalism is the agrarian revolution,²⁶ which aims at a redistribution of the land in accordance with the principle: "land to those who till it." Although large industrial and banking enterprises are nationalized, the capitalist system remains largely intact, but, at the same time, the pre-conditions of socialism are already created at this stage. Mao Tse-tung (1939) put it as follows:

While clearing the way for capitalism, this democratic revolution of a new type creates the pre-condition for socialism. The present stage of the Chinese revolution is a transitional stage between putting an end to the colonial, semi-colonial and semi-feudal society and establishing a socialist society—a process of a new-democratic revolution.²⁷

24. Stalin, "International Character of the October Revolution," *Problems of Leninism*, p. 242.

25. Houška and Kára, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

26. Cf. Stalin, "The Revolution in China and the Tasks of the Comintern," *Works*, IX, p. 291.

27. Mao Tse-tung, *op. cit.*, pp. 96-97.

Some Marxist writers admit, however, that this type of revolution need not lead to a joint dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, but may result in the establishment of certain intermediate forms of government. This part of the theory is usually based on Stalin's analysis of the Wuhan government in China in 1926-1927:

Is the present Wuhan government the organ of a new revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry? No, it is not such organ as yet, and will not soon become one. But it has every chance of developing into such organ, given further development of the revolution and the success of this revolution.²⁸

Another concrete example of such an intermediate revolutionary stage is seen in the situation which arose in Russia after the February revolution of 1917. The dual power of the Provisional Government and of the soviets is interpreted as a dual dictatorship, consisting of the bourgeois dictatorship of the Provisional Government and the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry of the soviets. The existence of a competitive government in the form of the Provisional Government is said to have prevented the soviets from developing into a full dictatorship, and therefore, the government of the soviets should be regarded as of having been of an intermediate nature, an incomplete dictatorship. This concept also appears, for example, in the Czechoslovak variant of the theory of people's democracy.

The Transition of the Two Revolutions

The people's democratic revolution is described as a process of transition from one stage to another for which the theoreticians of people's democracy use Lenin's term "pererastanie," an organic process of transformation during which a bourgeois-democratic revolution "grows into" a socialist revolution. During this transition, the people's democratic state changes from a joint dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry into an exclusive dictatorship of the proletariat.²⁹

While this concept is safely anchored in Lenin's writings, it is also strongly reminiscent of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution. Trotsky, long before Lenin, came to the conclusion that a revolution, once started under the leadership of the proletariat, could not be arrested at its bourgeois-democratic stage, but would pass over directly into a socialist revolution. Communist writers, fully aware of this uncomfortable resemblance, are anxious to differentiate, by means of semantic arguments, the "Leninist" concept of permanent revolution from its "Trotskiist perversion."³⁰ At

28. Stalin, *Works*, ix, p. 300.

29. Cf. *Political Economy*, p. 764; *Bolshaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia* (2. izd; Moskva: 1955), xxxii, p. 452.

30. Cf. *Bolshaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia*, xxxii, p. 509.

any rate, the process of transition of the two revolutions is never referred to as a "permanent" revolution; the Chinese version of the permanent revolution, which appeared under the name "uninterrupted" revolution in Mao's pronouncements and official statements of the Chinese Communist Party, apparently did not bear the stigma of the Trotskiist heresy.

In the Marxist theory, the "growing over" of the two revolutions is feasible only under certain conditions, both objective and subjective. The communists maintain that, under the conditions prevailing after the Second World War, the transition into a socialist revolution is also possible in countries which lack the necessary minimum of industrial development and have no proletariat. They add, however, that for a successful transition it is essential that such countries be assisted by other socialist states, as was the case of the Mongolian People's Republic, which, with the assistance of the Soviet Union, was able to bypass the capitalist stage, and to build gradually a socialist system.³¹

Furthermore, a successful transition is said to require a "persistence of a revolutionary situation," that is, the first revolution must not be permitted to stop, but should proceed immediately to its next stage.³² In practice, this means that the communists who played an important role in the so-called "national-democratic" revolutions must not allow their temporary allies a breathing space for any possible consolidation, but must keep the revolutionary tension and unrest until their real goal is accomplished.

A successful revolution not only presupposes the existence of such objective factors, but must also take into consideration certain subjective conditions, such as:

- (a) the presence of a revolutionary class capable of a "courageous, self-denying action," and
- (b) the existence of a party "tempered in struggle and possessed of a leadership with a high development of strategic and tactical abilities."³³

The communist writers distinguish between two forms of transition: a transition through a peaceful action or through an armed uprising. The people's democratic revolutions are examples of the former, while the Russian October Revolution serves as an example of the latter.

The theoreticians of people's democracy make the peaceful transition dependent on two conditions:

- (a) The "hegemon" of the bourgeois-democratic revolution must be the proletariat.
- (b) The relationship of the class forces within the country, as well as the

31. *Political Economy*, pp. 417-18.

32. Lenin, *Selected Works*, I, Part 2, p. 160. Cf. also *Bolshaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia*, xxxii, p. 453.

33. Rosental and Iudin, *Handbook of Philosophy*, edited and adapted by Howard Selsam (New York: International Publishers, 1949), p. 108.

general international situation, must be favorable to such a development.³⁴

If the proletariat succeeds in bringing the revolution to the stage of the joint revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, it temporarily shares political power with its allies from the bourgeois-democratic stage of the revolution. In this situation the revolution can proceed not only "from below" with the support of the masses, but "from above" as well, as the proletariat takes advantage of the various key positions in the government which are in its hands. The proletariat (*i.e.*, the communist party) employs its power for the purpose of isolating its former allies, strengthening its own positions, and finally, ousting its bourgeois allies from the government and concentrating the exclusive political power in its own hands.³⁵ The revolution "from above" is by no means a new concept in the communist vocabulary. It will be recalled that it was used earlier in connection with the mass collectivization of Soviet agriculture:

The mass collectivization and the liquidation of the basis of the kulaks as a class were the deepest revolutionary upheaval, equal in respect of its consequences to the revolutionary upheaval in October 1917. As is known, the peculiar nature of that upheaval consisted in the fact that it was accomplished from above, on the initiative of the Soviet state, with the widest support from below on the part of the multi-million peasant masses.³⁶

In the development of the people's democracies, the concept of the revolution "from above" has acquired a considerable significance. It was admitted by the communist sources that the transition to the socialist stage of the revolution was carried out mainly by a revolution "from above," by the laws and executive orders of the communist-controlled governments:

The transition from the democratic stage of the revolution to the socialist was achieved in the countries of people's democracy not by an upheaval and smashing of the state power, but peacefully through a revolution from above which took place on the initiative of state organs with the support of broad masses from below.³⁷

The introduction of the notion of the initiative "from above" into the theory of people's democracy appears somewhat surprising. The initiative "from above" has been associated with a gradual transition which, according to Stalin, is characteristic of the developments in a socialist society where antagonistic classes no longer exist and where the transition occurs on the initiative of the state, whereas the initiative "from below" is associated with a revolutionary uprising of the masses. The notion of gradualness was injected into the theory of Marxism-Leninism by Stalin who realized the danger that, in a strictly dialectical interpretation, even the advanced

34. Cf. D. I. Chesnokov, "Lenin i Stalin o gosudarstvennoi forme diktatury proletariata," *Voprosy filosofii*, No. 3 (1948), p. 59.

35. Sobolev, *People's Democracy*, pp. 90-91.

36. *Pravda*, Oct. 16, 1949.

37. N. V. Tropkin, *Ob osnovakh strategii i taktiki leninizma* (Moskva: Izd-vo Pravda, 1955), p. 12.

society of the Soviet Union would proceed to further stages by dialectical "leaps," that is, through revolutionary upheavals. Stalin tried to avoid this perilous implication by making a distinction between the developments in a society with hostile classes and in a society without such classes. While in the former the developments proceed by sudden explosions, changes in the latter occur only gradually, on the initiative of the state. The pertinent passage in Stalin's Letters on linguistics reads as follows:

...The law of transition from an old quality to a new one by means of an explosion not only does not apply to the history of the developments of languages; it often does not apply to other social phenomena either, whether they relate to the basis or the superstructure. Its application is compulsory in a society divided into hostile classes. However, it is by no means compulsory in a society which has no hostile classes. In the course of eight to ten years we effected a transition in the agriculture of our country from the bourgeois individual-peasant system to the socialist, collective-farm system. This was a revolution which eliminated the old bourgeois economic system in the countryside and created a new socialist, system. But this revolution did not occur by means of an explosion, that is, by the overthrow of the existing power and the creation of a new power, but by a gradual transition from the old bourgeois system of the countryside to a new system. We succeeded in doing this because it was a revolution from above, because the revolution was accomplished on the initiative of the existing power, with the active support of the overwhelming mass of the peasantry.³⁸

If Stalin's interpretation is accepted as valid, it is perhaps possible to understand the role of the government initiative "from above" in a country like Russia which is said to have already reached the stage where conflicting interests of various classes no longer exist. However, in a people's democratic state which is not yet socialist, and where a fierce class struggle is still going on, such a gradual transition through a revolution "from above" appears somewhat out of place, at least in theory. It cannot be denied that the revolutionary changes in the East European people's democracies were indeed carried out by means of government actions, but this happened only because the communists, who under the protective shield of the nearby stationed Soviet armies ruled these governments, were determined to obtain as much power as was compatible with the appearance of a coalition. No theoretical considerations concerning the applicability of the concept of a revolution "from above" at that particular stage of historical development entered the communist speculations at that time. The subsequent introduction of the notion of "gradualness" into a situation which was entirely different from that envisaged by Stalin when he formulated his addition to dialectical materialism, again shows how little the theory mattered when the revolutionary changes were taking place in Eastern Europe after World War II. Once more the theory serves here as a belated attempt to fit actual events into the theoretical framework of Marxism-Leninism.

38. I. V. Stalin, *Marksizm i voprosy iazykoznaniiia* (Moskva, Gospolizdat, 1952), pp. 28-29.

The theoreticians of people's democracy are far from regarding the transition of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution as a period of class peace. On the contrary, they underscore the intensified struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie for political power. It is a paradoxical situation, because the proletariat cooperates with the bourgeoisie on one hand, and fights it on the other. Liu Shao-ch'i described this dichotomy as follows:

In recent years, most of the national bourgeoisie have experienced the profound change of socialist transformation. Our task is to continue and to improve our cooperation with them, with a view to giving full play to their abilities and expert knowledge, and helping them to further remold themselves. Such cooperation should, as in the past, be at once uniting with them and waging struggles against them. Class struggle will go on until socialist transformation is completed.³⁹

A simultaneous cooperation with and a fight against the non-communist parties of the coalition was actually a common phenomenon in most of the people's democracies during the initial stage. This situation was well illustrated during the 1945-1948 period in Czechoslovakia. While there was an extensive cooperation between the Communist Party and the officially admitted non-communist political parties, the strategy of the Communist Party was aimed simultaneously at a gradual weakening and, finally, complete political isolation of the non-communist partners in the coalition. The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia made no overt attempt to seize exclusive political power in May of 1945, but preferred a gradual curtailing of the political positions of the non-communist parties.

Gottwald described these tactics as follows:

You must understand these dual tactics of ours, and this will give you an exact criterion for every situation...If we preach the tactics of the National Front and of collaboration with other non-communist political groups, it does not mean that the class struggle has been abandoned; it goes on in a different form which is for us more advantageous.⁴⁰

A communist author interpreted the concept of the dual tactics in more detail:

In the initial stage of the national democratic revolution a temporary collaboration with a certain sector of the bourgeoisie was a part of the tactics of the National Front. This collaboration was a new form of the class struggle, a form advantageous for the working class. The Communist Party applied here two principal methods of the struggle:

(a) selecting the more or less democratic elements within the bourgeois political parties (which was of a considerable importance later in February when certain bourgeois parties were reconstructed on this basis); support of

39. Liu Shao-ch'i, *The Political Report of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China to the Eighth National Congress*, Sept. 15, 1955 (Peking: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1955), pp. 62-63.

40. Klement Gottwald, *Spisy* (Praha: SNPL, 1953), XII, p. 24.

these elements; at the same time, detecting and discrediting the reactionary cliques within those parties, and preparing for their eventual defeat.

(b) seizing initiative in all problems incidental to the revolution and to the building of the people's democratic state. This initiative... was the principal instrument for exposing and isolating the bourgeoisie.

On the whole, the tactics of the National Front had *two sides*: the class struggle against the bourgeoisie, and the reaction,—which was its essence—and the national unity under which the struggle against the bourgeoisie could be successfully waged. (*Conflict of contradictions and unity of contradictions.*)⁴¹

The final goal of this dual tactics is to oust the bourgeoisie, "by force" if necessary, from its share in the government, and to win the masses for the communist cause "through persuasion."⁴² For that purpose the proletariat is expected to take certain steps during the period of transition of the two revolutions:

- (a) to concentrate in its hands all the key positions in the state;⁴³
- (b) to isolate the bourgeoisie, and to win over the majority of the toilers;
- (c) to utilize this situation for winning the majority of votes in the elections. The winning of the majority of the votes in the election is regarded as the culminating point in the process of the peaceful transition of a democratic revolution into a socialist revolution.⁴⁴

The Soviet theorists know also another form of transition, *i.e.*, the "growing over" of the two revolutions through an armed uprising, such as was the October Revolution in Russia in 1917. In cases like that a peaceful transition is impossible, and the proletariat must seize power by a forcible, sudden, overthrow of the bourgeoisie. Here the democratic revolution passes into a socialist not through a combined operation of the two revolutionary elements called revolution "from above" and "from below" but as the proletariat does not participate in the political power in the state it must rely solely on the revolution "from below." In such a case, the proletariat must create a revolutionary army and overthrow the bourgeois-democratic revolutionary government by force.⁴⁵

Under the impact of the people's democratic innovations, some changes had to be made in the theoretical formulation of the proletarian revolution proper. It is no longer necessary to defeat the political power of the bourgeoisie in one stroke and to set up the dictatorship of the proletariat immediately. A more subtle way was added to the arsenal of revolutionary weapons of Marxism-Leninism. In this new proletarian revolution, the proletariat takes over the governmental power gradually, by means of a

41. Bystřina, *Lidová demokracie*, p. 206.

42. Houška and Kára, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

43. Cf. Nikita S. Khrushchev, *Report of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to the 20th Congress* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1956), p. 43.

44. Houška and Kára, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

45. Figurnov, *Mirovaia sistema sotsializma* (Moskva: Gos. izd-vo polit. lit-ry, 1957), p. 19.

"revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the people," through the process of transition of a bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution, or, perhaps "in some other form not yet spelled out."⁴⁶

Although the main content of the first phase of the people's democratic revolution represented changes of a general democratic character, it is asserted that it went beyond that, because the working class, as the leading force in the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, "could not restrict itself to these changes, and carried through a series of measures which prepared the transition to the second stage of the revolution," such as the establishment of workers' control over production, confiscation of the property of war criminals and capitalists who collaborated with the occupying forces, and confiscation of the property of the "monopolistic bourgeoisie" closely connected with these groups. While such measures were not yet socialist, they greatly weakened the economic position of the bourgeoisie, brought into the hands of the state a considerable part of big industry, and introduced a state monopoly of trade in certain essential commodities.⁴⁷ All these changes were carried out with the active participation of the middle bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie of the era of people's democracy was of course not the bourgeoisie of the time prior to World War II, since it was already reduced to a second class political power. In this event Sobolev sees the "revolutionary turning point."⁴⁸ Nevertheless, the bourgeoisie, though weakened, still had some political power, and the full support of the masses for a socialist revolution was still lacking.⁴⁹ Under such circumstances, Sobolev explains, the bourgeoisie could not be ignored or immediately exterminated without jeopardizing the success of the revolution. The communists found a way for overcoming this difficulty in the so-called "neutralization" of the middle bourgeoisie, that is, in a policy of adapting the programs of the communist parties in order to conform to the demands of the bourgeoisie, such as recognition of the private ownership of the means of production within certain limits acceptable to both sides, freedom of private enterprise, and the participation of the bourgeoisie in the state administration. This policy was exceedingly useful for the communists since it prevented the formation of a united bloc of opposition, and became an important step for the subsequent policy of isolating the bourgeoisie and its final defeat.

46. Houška and Kára, *op. cit.*, p. 16. The remark referring to the thus far unspelled-out form of revolutionary transition is indicative of the continuous communist search for forms not recognized earlier as revolutionary. The new notion of "national democracy," which appears to be the successor of the people's democratic formula, as well as the renewed notion of the "popular front" may very well be such new forms of revolutionary transition to socialism.

47. *Political Economy*, p. 763.

48. Sobolev, *People's Democracy*, p. 48.

49. Sobolev, *Chto takoe narodnaia demokratiia*, (Moskva: Gos. izd-vo polit. lit-ry, 1956), p. 46.

The form of government created by the bourgeois-democratic revolution was called by Lenin "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry." The theorists of the people's democracy therefore dutifully refer to the regimes established in Eastern Europe after World War II by that name.

In accordance with Lenin's theory of revolution, the proletariat, as the "hegemon" of the people's democratic revolution, must next get rid of its bourgeois ally in order to proceed to the socialist stage of the revolution. The consolidation of the hegemony of the proletariat and of the leading role of the communist party is regarded as an essential condition for the transition to the proletarian-socialist revolution which has been defined as "a forcible overthrow of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, and establishment of a dictatorship of the proletariat aimed at the destruction of the capitalist system of production and the organization of a new, socialist, system of production."⁵⁰ The proletariat must now defeat and eliminate the bourgeoisie, proceed to the socialist revolution and establish its own exclusive class dictatorship. This goal can be accomplished only by a gradual strengthening of the proletariat's position, and by various measures aimed at the liquidation of the economic position of the bourgeoisie. The most important measure in this line is the nationalization of large-scale industry, banks, means of transportation and foreign trade. In this strategy, the real purpose of the nationalization is the destruction of the economic basis of the social strata hostile to the people's democratic regime as well as the separation of the people's democratic countries from economic dependence on the West.⁵¹ The transfer of the essential positions in the economic life to the state is supposed to weaken the bourgeoisie even further.⁵² The success of the socialist revolution in Eastern Europe was due, according to Sobolev, to the following circumstances:

- (a) The revolution took place at the time of a favorable political correlation of forces both internal and external.
- (b) The socialist revolution was not a mere *coup d'état*, but a "consummation of a chain of revolutions."
- (c) The socialist revolution was not an instantaneous act, but a series of separate outbreaks which together made up the socialist revolution.
- (d) The revolution was a result of an interaction of popular pressure and administrative measures (simultaneous revolution from below and from above).
- (e) The socialist revolution in the countries of people's democracy was carried out without an armed uprising. The relative absence of violence in the people's democratic revolution did not mean, however, that there was no class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Sobolev

50. Rosental and IUdin, *Kratkii filosofskii slovar*, p. 393.

51. Sobolev, *People's Democracy*, p. 92.

52. Sobolev, "Narodnaia demokratiia...", p. 29.

enumerates with complete frankness various means used by the communists in the struggle for power, such as:

- (1) political demonstrations;
- (2) forcible seizure of the government agencies;
- (3) undermining of the economic power of the bourgeoisie;
- (4) in some cases, a forcible suppression of the military establishments of the bourgeoisie;
- (5) parliamentary victory over the bourgeoisie.⁵³

According to Sobolev, Czechoslovakia represented a classical example of a revolution through the parliamentary victory of the communist party.⁵⁴ He pointed out, however, that the parliamentary forms of struggle were of a "subordinate nature," a mere "reflection of the political changes than the means of their accomplishment."⁵⁵ Of much greater importance, according to Sobolev, was the suppression of the bourgeoisie by those links of the state apparatus which were already in the hands of the working class, primarily the state security organs as well as the lower organs of power. All these steps were taken in the almost complete absence of violence, a phenomenon attributed to the support extended to the people's democracies by the Soviet Union.

From a strictly Marxist point of view, there is a serious flaw in the elaborate structure of the Soviet theory of the people's democratic revolution. As noted earlier, the nature or type of the revolution is determined by what social aims it realizes and what contradictions it resolves. The bourgeois-democratic revolution is supposed to realize the abolition of feudalism and establishment of bourgeois capitalism. To deny this fundamental fact would be tantamount to a complete repudiation of the very basis of Marxism. The bourgeois revolution is aimed at the destruction of feudalism and establishment of bourgeois capitalism, or it simply would not be a "bourgeois" revolution at all. The presence of a feudal order, is essential to the concept of a bourgeois revolution in the Marxist sense. Thus where there was no feudalism in a social system, it had to be invented. Sobolev found a solution of this difficulty by asserting that the Nazis reintroduced feudalism or even a slave system, which, according to Sobolev, was a "component part of fascist social policy."⁵⁶

Sobolev's interpretation of Nazi neofeudalism for the purposes of justifying a bourgeois-democratic revolution in highly industrialized countries of Central and Eastern Europe is another crude attempt to fit events into the conceptual framework of Marxism-Leninism without regard to the actual situation. Despite the presence of some superficial feudal notions in the national socialist ideology, it would be absurd to assert that the

53. Sobolev, *Chto takoe narodnaia demokratiia*, pp. 54-55.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 55.

55. Sobolev, *People's Democracy*, pp. 91-92.

56. Sobolev, "Narodnaia demokratiia....," p. 27.

Germans had reintroduced the feudal system in Europe. At any rate, the national socialist rule was too brief to permit a profound integration with the contemporary society. The authors of the Soviet theory of people's democratic revolution became victims of the notorious ritualistic adherence to various ideological conceptions which were regarded in the communist world as absolute and immutable. Nevertheless, Sobolev's formulation, including his theoretical interpretation of feudalism, found a wide acceptance among other Soviet political scientists.

The problem of avoiding the anti-feudal implications in the theory of people's democracy has plagued many communist theoreticians. Some of them found an effective device in simply leaving out the "bourgeois" adjective from the term "bourgeois-democratic" revolution, and in calling the people's democratic revolution simply "democratic," or, more frequently, "national democratic revolution."⁵⁷ The Czechoslovak communists, well aware of this difficulty, offered tentatively a more flexible definition of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. Houška and Kára defined the revolution "of the bourgeois type" as a "revolution which resolves social contradictions on the basis of either developing or already developed capitalist relations of production, but does not, on the whole, immediately exceed the framework of capitalist relations of production." Therefore, each revolution which does not exceed the framework of the capitalist relations of production is a "bourgeois revolution regardless of whether such revolution occurs in a country with significant feudal survivals or in an advanced country where there are no such survivals."⁵⁸ Another Czechoslovak theorist pointed out that anti-feudal tasks were by no means the only ones which a bourgeois-democratic revolution was supposed to resolve, but that the revolution simply aimed at a "national liberation, against fascism and imperialism," and, as such, was a part of the world proletarian revolution. He called such a revolution "democratic," and not "bourgeois-democratic."⁵⁹ Nevertheless, Sobolev's interpretation of the people's democratic revolution remained, in essence, the official Soviet theory, and the opinions of the Czechoslovak or Bulgarian theorists were printed in Soviet reviews only as contributions to discussion.⁶⁰

57. This formulation was acceptable to the Bulgarian theorists who have always been very critical of Sobolev with regard to Bulgaria. The Bulgarian revolution of September 9, 1944, was interpreted as a form of "access" to the dictatorship of the proletariat, an anti-imperialist and democratic revolution, not an anti-feudal revolution. Cf. Stefan Angelov, *Narodno demokratichnata drzhava, glavno orudie za postroivane na sotsializma v Bulgariia* (Sofia: Izdatelstvo na Bulgarskata Komunisticheska Partia, 1958), p. 52. At that time, the notion of an "independent state of national democracy" was absent from the communist vocabulary.

58. Houška and Kára, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

59. Radim N. Foustka, "Ještě k diskusi o charakteru naší revoluce," *Právník*, xciv, No. 3 (1955), p. 169.

60. Cf. T. D. Pavlov, "K voprosu o kharaktere bolgarskoi narodno-demokraticheskoi revolutsii," *Voprosy filosofii*, No. 6 (1956), pp. 44-57. Ivan Bystrina, "Ob

Theory and Reality

The doctrine of the two revolutions is directly connected with the Leninist concept of the party as a group of selected professional revolutionaries. A revolutionary minority party necessarily requires a special minority strategy, the basic concept of which is the realization that the communist party, in most cases, is numerically too weak to attempt its own proletarian revolution. For that reason, the communist party always puts forward two sets of objectives, a long-range objective and a short-range one. The short-range objective represents a minimum program of action to be carried out immediately. Since the fulfillment merely facilitates the attainment of the maximum program, the minimum program is essentially a means to an end. The short-range objective in the Leninist practice often becomes an end in itself, and as such requires a total concentration of effort. Under these circumstances, any consideration of long-range goals would constitute a distraction which might jeopardize the fulfillment of essential immediate tasks. It is therefore an established practice that, during the first stage of the revolution, the communists keep silent about the next steps, and devote all their efforts to the pursuance of the immediate minimum program. The goal of acquiring total power usually can be realized only through a combination of two revolutions, the first of which is not socialist at all, but professes general progressive aims, and thus finds a wide following among all liberal groups. The communists can leave the task of destroying the existing political order to others, while they themselves must skilfully seize the control, and proceed to the proletarian side of the revolution. This strategy is well suited to agrarian countries with weak proletariat but numerically strong peasantry.⁶¹

The people's democratic revolution is depicted in the Soviet theory as a popular mass rising of the workers united with the peasantry and other "progressive" elements. The crucial question is: were the developments in Eastern Europe at the end of World War II a genuine revolution, or were these events merely an execution of a Soviet plan which is interpreted by the communists as a revolution?

The answer depends to a large measure on the interpretation of the term revolution.⁶² If the only decisive characteristic feature of a revolution is

osobennostiakh vozniknovaniia i razvitiia narodnoi demokratii v Checoslovakii," *Voprosy filosofii*, No. 4 (1957), pp. 26-40.

61. Cf. Josef M. Bochenski and Gerhart Niemeyer, *Handbuch des Weltkommunismus* (Freiburg: K. Alber, 1958), p. 96.

62. The difficulty in finding the proper answer is caused among other things by the enormous scope of the meanings of the term "revolution." A German student of social sciences devoted his doctoral dissertation to composing a list of the various meanings of the word "revolution." See Franz Wilhelm Seidler, *Die Geschichte des Wortes Revolution*. Unpublished dissertation. München, 1958.

a profound transformation of the social order, then the changes in Eastern Europe were indeed a major revolution. If we add another condition, whether these changes were brought about by a rising of the masses, the answer to the above question would be negative. The changes in Eastern Europe certainly cannot be called a spontaneous revolution in a sense that implies that they were carried out as a class struggle in the name of an oppressed majority of toilers against the privileged bourgeois minority. The political and social transformations in Eastern Europe were carried out, for the most part, by administrative measures of the respective governments, which—under Soviet pressure—had pledged themselves to certain political, economic, and social reforms. Whatever popular pressure was required for carrying out this “revolution from above,” it was supplied ready-made and in proxy by the communist parties acting under instructions from the Kremlin. Though there was a wide-spread resistance movement against the Nazi in Eastern Europe in degrees varying from country to country, this resistance alone, even when it reached the degree of an open rebellion as in Warsaw and Slovakia, nowhere resulted in the establishment of people’s democracy. For a successful establishment of a people’s democratic regime a physical presence or proximity of the Red Army was the essential requirement. Yet it cannot even be maintained that it was the other kind of revolution, a “planned” revolution consisting of a series of interlocking plots initiated and carried out by the communist conspiracies in each country. In fact, as Borkenau pointed out, this operation was “not even of a political character” in the proper sense of the word, because—with the exception of Yugoslavia—not one of the satellite countries was conquered by its communists either during or after the war, but they were all conquered by the Russian army.⁶³ It was rather a straight usurpation of power by self-appointed governments which were totally subservient to the communist members of the so-called coalition.

It was a safe revolution, since the threat of an armed Soviet intervention was a sufficient deterrent to almost all who dared think of opposition. However, an actual intervention apparently was the *ultima ratio* which neither the Soviet Union nor the local communists were eager to employ. They hoped that a mere threat would suffice. The revolution naturally had to be carefully adapted to concrete conditions in each country. The communists had learned a great deal from the abortive revolution of Béla Kun in Hungary in 1919. At that time, the revolution had failed, not only because of the foreign intervention, but also because it was too abstract, too divorced from the concrete situation. The communist strategy was wrong, as the communists did not have allies, nor an adequate agrarian reform program, nor a clear economic policy. All these errors had to be avoided this time. The revolution needed a strong national appeal, broad

63. Borkenau, *European Communism*, pp. 484-85.

democratic program, a clear-cut agrarian reform and, especially, non-communist allies. The "people's democratic revolution" fulfilled all these requirements. It had a strong nationalistic—even chauvinistic—character. It was also a revolution with sufficiently limited objectives, with ideological demands either absent or greatly subdued in order to attract liberals who desired a reform but abhorred Soviet methods of implementation.

It would be outside the scope of the present study to speculate to what extent the Soviet conquest of Eastern Europe was a planned move or whether it was largely a result of an improvisation. Whatever the ultimate objectives of the Soviet Union were in Eastern Europe, it is certain that the Soviets made consistent efforts, even before the end of World War II, to impose total control by the local communists in all countries of Eastern and Central Europe, and succeeded everywhere except in Finland, Greece and Austria. (Things later went wrong for the Soviet Union in Yugoslavia, but for different reasons.) Whether the Soviet conquest was premeditated or improvised, one essential fact remains: the presence of the Soviet armies in Eastern Europe and the Soviet support extended to leftist elements in those countries were instrumental in the establishment of the communist and communist-controlled regimes in that area.

It would be wrong, however, to assume, that the developments in Eastern Europe were exclusively a result of a Soviet action, whether direct or indirect. Some of the countries which find themselves today in the Soviet orbit had strong communist movements in the interwar period, *e.g.*, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria. In addition, pro-Russian sympathies were strong in some of these countries. Various social and economic factors also facilitated the success of the revolution. With the exception of Czechoslovakia, East Europe failed to develop a strong middle class. The inherent weakness of the bourgeoisie was conducive to alliances between big land owners and various military cliques in the interwar period, and led to various dictatorial or semi-dictatorial regimes; on the economic side, it meant poverty, backwardness and social unrest. The Soviet Union, which based its policy on collaboration with the discontented elements of these countries, had in this a great asset which it never let slip away. The concept of a regime which appeared democratic and progressive compared to its reactionary predecessors was acceptable not only to the socialists but also to certain liberal groups who resented the Soviet system, yet were in favor of political and social reforms. The formula of people's democracy sounded like a possible compromise between a communistic regime and a Western-type democracy.

For a while it seemed that the half-way house formula might work.⁶⁴

64. Skilling seems to have accepted the opinion that, at least for a limited time, the Soviet leaders of the early post-war period believed in the possibility that socialism in Eastern Europe could be built differently, in a specific national way. Though he is not quite explicit, his articles in the *American-Slavic and East European*

The brief history of the European people's democracies show two distinct periods, the first ending at the close of 1946 or beginning of 1947, the second period of gradual stiffening becoming increasingly manifest since the summer of 1947. The two periods correspond roughly to what the communists call "historical phases," the phase of bourgeois-democratic revolution and the phase of proletarian-socialist revolution. Here again, the ideological distinction between the two periods is the result of an *ex post facto* analysis of events which was not even accepted by all communists. During the first period, some reforms were carried out which appeared to have been made in the genuine interest of the population, *e.g.*, the land reform and a number of measures toward the economic reconstruction. The political life showed an interesting resemblance to the Western system of democracy. Some of the signs appeared so convincing that the genuine functioning of democratic institutions in at least certain East European countries was taken for granted, as in Czechoslovakia and Hungary.

Little attention was paid in the West to the peculiar dualism of a formal parliamentary government and a secret, behind-the-scenes, government of the communist party. In Fejtő's words:

On one hand, the parties were organizing themselves, political passions were let loose, there were discussions, insults, battles in the parliament, at the meetings, in the cafés, on the other, a feeling prevailed among the population that their country was dominated by a secret government whose decisions had the force of law regardless of the general elections and the popular will.⁶⁵

The communists utilized the period of moderation to further consolidation of their power through a variety of means which cannot be discussed within the scope of the present study. Their success was greatly facilitated by an amazing degree of naiveté, incompetence and opportunism displayed by their democratic adversaries.⁶⁶ When the need for preserving the demo-

Review, x, No. 2 (April, 1951), and in *Political Science Quarterly*, LXVII, No. 2 (June, 1952), seem to indicate this opinion. Sharp rejects this interpretation. In his opinion, the Soviet acceptance of the different path to socialism in the early post-war period had merely a tactical meaning. (Samuel L. Sharp, "New Democracy: A Soviet Interpretation," *American Perspective* (November, 1947), p. 377, 380.

65. François Fejtő, *Histoire des démocraties populaires* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1957), p. 125.

66. The slogans about a specific national path to socialism circulated by the communists after World War II were also adopted by a number of non-communist East European politicians who, together with the communists, belonged to various "people's fronts." The pro-Soviet propaganda expounded by such non-communists proved to be more valuable to Moscow than the same propaganda circulated by the communists. The peoples of Eastern Europe who, in their vast majority, had little sympathy for communism were far better disposed to trust their democratic politicians than the communist leaders. The complacency, indecision, and timidity of the non-communist members of the people's fronts, and often the deliberate misleading of the bewildered people, prevented a rallying of the democratic forces, stifled a potential anti-communist opposition, and made the complete seizure of

cratic appearances in the Soviet satellite countries became unnecessary in view of the open split between the Soviet Union and the Western powers, all democratic pretenses were unceremoniously dropped and replaced by a rigid communist orthodoxy despite the formula of people's democracy. The Soviet Union never wanted any independent communist regimes in Eastern Europe, neither did it desire any genuine communist revolutions which would lead to independent communist regimes in that area. For that reason alone, the people's democratic revolution could never have been a genuine revolution.

The independent communist victory in Yugoslavia, and later, the emergence of a communist government in China, required a departure from Stalinist dogmatism which insisted on the universal applicability of the Russian pattern. The principle of "separate paths to socialism," approved by the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, was a concession to Yugoslavia and China in that respect. Nevertheless, there was no intention on the part of the Soviet leaders to grant a genuine sovereign equality to the other communist regimes in Eastern Europe. Nor does it seem probable that Khrushchev desired future independent communist victories any more than Stalin did. Such victories would only strengthen the centrifugal forces in the communist movement which are incompatible with the central concept of communist ideology according to which the movement is international and, as such, should have a single center. Until recently, the Soviet Union was the sole ideological leader of the world communist movement, a fact which was recognized even by Communist China.⁶⁷ After nearly half a century of monopoly, the Soviet Union was confronted with an unprecedented competition from at least two other centers, Communist China and Yugoslavia. It cannot be reasonably expected that Moscow would voluntarily renounce its leadership of international communism or concede to others a genuine ideological and institutional autonomy. Various events in the recent past have shown to the Soviet leaders that they can rely neither on the absolute loyalty of the national communist parties nor on their ability to control the population. The concept of a real communist commonwealth in the form of a voluntary association of communist states seems to be a far way off. While it is difficult for Moscow to ensure even an acceptable degree of conformity in the satellite nations, it is impossible to control communist nations which are too big to be mere satellites. The balance in the ideological competition between the USSR and the Chinese People's Republic appears to be still in Russia's

power by the communists so easy that the communist coups in Hungary and Czechoslovakia could be carried out smoothly without any serious resistance.

67. Cf. Chou En-lai, *Report on the Work of the Government*, delivered at the First Session of the Second National People's Congress on April 18, 1959 (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1959).

favor, but may not remain so in the future. The theory of people's democracy, as formulated by Moscow, was designed to ensure a conformity in the socialist camp under the Soviet ideological and political leadership. Under such circumstances the political system of people's democracy could never represent a genuinely independent regime. The present Soviet trend to compromise on the component parts of the doctrine may even further endanger the Soviet leadership of international communism, especially among the nations for whom the prospect of a parliamentary victory of socialism is too remote, and where the local communists seem little inclined to wait patiently for a "peaceful" conquest of power.

The future development of the theory of revolution will depend on the outcome of the present schism of world communism. A return to the former monolithic unity is unlikely. The rule of one communist party over the other communist parties will have to be replaced by some arrangement under which the leadership of world communism would become more international so as to grant to other communist parties at least some voice in the decision making process.

CHAPTER III

THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC STATE

The Marxian sequence of two revolutions was reflected in two different forms of the people's democratic state. According to the official Soviet theory of people's democracy, the people's democratic state can be either a joint dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry or a dictatorship of the proletariat.¹ The change from the former to the latter occurs in the transitional process called the "growing over of a bourgeois-democratic revolution into a proletarian socialist revolution" which is a doctrinal interpretation of the phenomenon that a revolutionary impetus is hard to keep within bounds, yet can be effectively manipulated by skilled professional revolutionaries. Whether a particular people's democratic state is a dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry or a dictatorship of the proletariat depends on the concrete situation:

The experience of the people's democracies in Europe and Asia shows that a people's democracy passes through different stages, and depending upon the stage, its class content changes.

The first stage is that of the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolution, in the course of which a people's democracy arises as the organ of revolutionary power, representing in its class content something akin to the dictatorship of the working class and peasantry, with the working class in the leading role. The new popular power in this stage has its sharp edge directed against imperialist oppression, fascism, as well as against the prop of imperialism and fascism within the country—big monopoly capital and landlordism.

The second stage is that of the socialist revolution, when the dictatorship of the working class is being established and begins to fulfill its tasks.²

1. Cf. *Politicheskii slovar* (Moskva: Gos. izd-vo polit. lit-ry, 1956), pp. 55-56. *Bolshaia sovetskaia entsiklopediia* (2. izd.; Moskva, 1954), xxix, p. 131. *Kratkii filosofskii slovar* (Moskva: Gos. izd-vo polit. lit-ry, 1955), pp. 306-308. *Akademiia nauk sssr, Institut ekonomiki, Political Economy* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1957), pp. 764-65. O. V. Kuusinen and others, *Fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism*; Manual (2d rev. ed. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1963), pp. 533ff.

2. Sobolev, *People's Democracy*... p. 9. Sobolev uses here the term "working class" instead of "proletariat." This would be appropriate for the Soviet Union where, according to Stalin, socialism was already established and the proletariat was "transformed into an entirely new class, the working class of the u.s.s.r." However, the people's democracies, according to the official theory, have not reached that stage and are presently engaged in the construction of socialism. The antithesis between the proletariat and the capitalists still exists there. Sobolev uses the term "working class" as a synonym of "proletariat," an inaccuracy which is common in the present communist usage.

Joint Dictatorship of the Proletariat and Peasantry

In the first official statement of the theory of people's democracy by Dimitrov, people's democracies were described as straight dictatorships of the proletariat whose main tasks were the liquidation of capitalist elements and organizing socialist economy. Nevertheless a certain distinction had to be made between the various phases of development of the people's democracies, since there clearly was a considerable difference between the initial stage of 1944-46 and the subsequent stage around 1947-48.³

The theory assigns to the people's democratic state of the first phase certain functions, such as: (a) rallying forces for the purpose of defeating fascism and destroying the remnants of feudalism; (b) undermining the economic bases of the reaction; (c) democratization of the social and economic life; (d) reconstruction of the national economy devastated by the war.⁴

Farberov saw as one of the most important achievements of the first phase of the development of the people's democracies a "profound transformation of the class relationship."⁵

None of these tasks could be called strictly socialist, although some of them, such as "undermining of the economic basis of the reaction," "democratization of the social and economic life," and "profound transformation of the class relationships," were formulated so vaguely that they could mean anything. It was admitted that the socialist tasks did not come until in the second phase of the development, during the second half of 1947 and the first half of 1948, when "the reaction was smashed in all people's democratic countries, the hegemony of the proletariat allied with the peasantry was strengthened, and the leading role of the communist parties was fully recognized."⁶

According to the official theory, the people's democratic stage began as a "dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry," and evolved into a "dictatorship of the proletariat" through a protracted process, which in Europe began in 1945 and ended in 1947/1948. Certain conditions are required for the establishment of a full dictatorship of the proletariat, such as:

- (1) The position of the communist party must be fully consolidated, and its influence must surpass the influence of all other parties taken together.
- (2) The bourgeoisie must be liquidated as an independent political force, and its representatives must be removed from the state apparatus.

3. Cf. A. Rossi, "Théorie des démocraties populaires," *Preuves*, No. 27 (Mai 1953), p. 62.

4. Mankovskii, *Narodno-demokraticheskie respubliky iugovostochnoi Evropy*, Slovak translation, p. 13.

5. Farberov, *Gosudarstvennoe pravo stran narodnoi demokratii*, p. 17.

6. Mankovskii, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

- (3) The leading positions in the state apparatus must be in the hands of the communists.
- (4) The key positions in the economy must be concentrated in the hands of the people's democratic state.
- (5) The workers' parties must merge into one under the leadership of the Marxist-Leninist party.⁷

This state of affairs must be prepared by skilful manoeuvres of the communist party during the period of the bourgeois-democratic (or, as it is sometimes called, national-democratic) revolution. In other words, the stage of the national revolution is a mere preparatory stage for setting up an exclusive communist dictatorship.

Since all people's democratic states are expected to traverse the stage of the joint dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry and to enter the stage of the dictatorship of the proletariat proper sooner or later, an inquiry into the nature of the people's democratic state should begin with a brief analysis of these two forms of government. The concept of the joint dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry was Lenin's contribution to the Marxian theory of the state. Marx made no provisions for a revolution in a country without a substantial industrial proletariat. Lenin, a practical revolutionary, had to deal with problems which Marx either did not anticipate or did not consider important. The Russian peasantry appeared to him as a potential reservoir for supplying the badly needed masses for the revolution, and it was only natural that the vast mass of the peasants should be offered a share in his theory of revolution. The idea of a revolutionary cooperation between the proletariat and the peasantry had of course a mere theoretical significance. The actual development took an entirely different course, as Lenin soon found out that he could not count on the support of the masses, and had to substitute a conspiratorial elite instead.

While the dictatorship of the proletariat received ample attention in Lenin's writings, the joint dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, as a mere passing phenomenon, was somewhat neglected. In his *Two Tactics of Social Democracy in Russia*, Lenin described the joint revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry as a state which relies on military force, on the arming of masses, on an insurrection, and repudiates any institutions established in a "lawful or peaceful way."⁸ He anticipated that this revolutionary state would be confronted with a number of tasks which could be solved only under a ruthless dictatorship, such as the crushing of the resistance of the landlords, big bourgeoisie and tsarism, as well as the repelling of counter-revolutionary efforts. Despite its ruthless character, Lenin thought it necessary to keep the joint revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry strictly

7. Sobolev, *People's Democracy...*, pp. 94-95.

8. Lenin, *Selected Works*, 1, Part 2, p. 56.

within the framework of capitalism.⁹ Stalin referred to a joint revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry in connection with his analysis of the Wuhan government in China in 1926-27.¹⁰ Mao's "democratic dictatorship of the people" resembles a somewhat enlarged joint dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. Mao, however, regarded his "democratic dictatorship of the people" not as a joint dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry but as a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat devised for the purpose of maintaining a dictatorship based on a coalition.

Concrete examples of the joint dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry from a more recent period are lacking. States which are now described as having been formerly joint dictatorships of the proletariat and peasantry were not called such prior to the enunciation of the present doctrine of people's democracy. Once again, the classification of the post-war regimes in Eastern Europe as joint dictatorships of the proletariat and peasantry is merely a doctrinal rationalization of the fact that these governments were based on coalitions in which the communist parties played a dominant but not an exclusive role. In Czechoslovakia, where the post-war coalition government was perhaps more genuine than the coalitions in other East European countries, the peasant parties were not even represented in the coalition. In Bulgaria and Rumania, the participation of the peasant parties in the government lasted only a short time. The silencing of the Bulgarian Agrarian Union began with the forced resignation of Dr. G. I. M. Dimitrov from the secretaryship of this party in January, 1945, and its suppression was completed later with Petkov's resignation and execution. In Rumania, the coalition stage ended in March, 1945, when the Soviet Union forced King Michael to surrender his powers to Groza's National Front Government, and the gradual suppression of the Rumanian Peasant Party culminated in Maniu's trial and imprisonment in 1947. In Poland, the Polish Peasant Party was regarded by the communists more as an enemy than a coalition partner. In the summer of 1946, Mikolajczyk, the President of the Polish Peasant Party, was forced out from the coalition government of which he was hardly more than a formal member. In Hungary, the Smallholders' (Peasant) Party was the strongest political party of the post-war coalition, with Ferenc Nagy as Prime Minister. The communists and the Soviet occupation forces certainly did not regard the Hungarian coalition government as a model example of a joint dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, and they tried to break it at the first opportunity. After the arrest of Béla Kovács, General Secretary of the Smallholders' Party, in February, 1947, Ferenc Nagy was forced out from the coalition government, and the participation of the peasant party in the coalition was reduced to a formality. In Yugoslavia, the Communist Party was firmly in control of the National Liberation Front, in which some peasant leaders

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57.

10. See *supra*, p. 38.

were tolerated for a short time. In July 1946, Dragoljub Jovanović, a Serbian peasant leader, made some criticism of the official policy in a speech in the parliament for which he was expelled from his own Peasant Party and finally arrested. A similar fate was in store for the Croatian Peasant leader, Franjo Gazi.

The record of cooperation between workers and peasants during the stage of their joint dictatorship in Eastern Europe is hardly convincing. It should be borne in mind, however, that for the purpose of doctrinal uniformity, the communists are ready to call a joint dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry any coalition government in which they are sufficiently strong but are not yet the exclusive and unopposed masters. In such a coalition the proletariat is represented by the customary proxy, the communist party, whereas the peasantry can be represented by practically any group which the communists find at least temporarily acceptable, and which is not strong enough to pursue an independent policy.

Dictatorship of the Proletariat

There is abundant material for the study of the people's democratic state in its more developed form, the dictatorship of the proletariat. The dictatorship of the proletariat is one of the central issues of Marxism-Leninism, and it received ample attention in the writings of Lenin and Stalin. The theory of people's democracy stresses the variety of forms of revolutionary development in various countries and the richness of the forms of transition from capitalism to socialism, but it is emphasized that the construction of socialism is directed by certain laws which are obligatory for all countries building socialism.¹¹

The "basic laws of socialist construction" which were officially defined in the *Moscow Declaration of the World's Communist Parties* of November 14-16, 1957, underscored the necessity of the stage of the proletarian dictatorship as the first among the "basic laws."¹² Although it has now been officially proclaimed that, in the Soviet Union, a dictatorship of the proletariat is no longer necessary, its inevitability as a transitional stage between capitalism and socialism has been reaffirmed. The Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, adopted by the Twenty-second Party Congress, meeting in Moscow, October-November, 1961, declares that "however varied the forms of a new people's state power in the period of socialist construction, their essence will be the same—dictatorship of the proletariat which represents genuine democracy for the working people."¹³ In an

11. L. Gatovskii, "Ob obshchikh zakonomernostiakh i osobennostiakh stroitelstva sotsializma v raznykh stranakh," *Voprosy ekonomiki*, No. 12 (1957), p. 12.

12. *For Peace, for Socialism: Statements of the World's Communist Parties* (London: Communist Party of Gt. Britain, 1957), pp. 8-9.

13. "The Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Draft), 1961."

elaboration of this theoretical pronouncement, an ideological article in the *Kommunist* re-stated the need for a dictatorship of the proletariat during the transitional period in these words:

The concrete paths, tempos and forms of social transformations vary and will continue to vary within a wide range according to the country in question and the actual situation. However, one thing remains immutable: for the construction of socialism, a dictatorship of the proletariat, a political rule of the working class, is inevitable.¹⁴

The Soviet theory of the state knows three concrete forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The first was the Paris Commune of 1871. The second were the Russian soviets, as "the highest, most perfect form of the dictatorship of the proletariat,"¹⁵ a rigorous form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, which is said to have been necessary to overcome the hardships surrounding the first socialist state. The third form of the dictatorship of the proletariat is represented by people's democracy.

In the Marxian theory, the dictatorship of the proletariat is a state created by the proletarian revolution, an intermediate stage between capitalism and socialism. Its definition in Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme* became the basic theoretical formula for the two contemporary forms of this dictatorship, the soviet state and the people's democratic state. Marx defined the proletarian state as follows:

Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. There corresponds to this also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.¹⁶

Lenin, in his *State and Revolution*, used the following variant:

The transition from capitalism to communism will certainly bring a great variety and abundance of political forms, but the essence will inevitably be only one: the dictatorship of the proletariat.¹⁷

These two formulas became the fundamental law of the current official Marxist-Leninist theory of the state.

According to Marx and Engels, the dictatorship of the proletariat is an instrument of the social revolution which intervenes in the period of social transformation lying between the ascent of the workers to political power and the establishment of communism, and it has two principal tasks to perform:

In *The Communist Blueprint for the Future*; the complete texts of all four Communist manifestoes, 1848-1961 (New York: Dutton, 1962), p. 139.

14. A. Bovin, "Ot gosudarstva diktatury proletariata k obshchenarodnomu gosudarstvu," *Kommunist*, xxxviii, No. 5 (March, 1962), p. 24.

15. Sobolev, "Narodnaia demokratiia...", p. 25.

16. Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, II, p. 30.

17. Lenin, *State and Revolution*, p. 31.

(a) To destroy the resistance of the overthrown class of the capitalists and to hold down the adversaries of the proletarian state "by means of terror" if necessary, and,

(b) To carry out an economic revolution which will eventually bring about the abolition of classes, and thus remove all antagonisms for which the state as a power standing above society is necessary. The first economic act of the state is to seize the means of production in the name of society and transform them into state property. This, however, is not a purpose in itself. The real purpose is to augment the volume of production which is said to be possible only under a new social order because the capitalist order has become a hindrance to economic progress. The socialist order is expected to release a new expansion of productive resources by means of a higher per capita productivity, higher living standards of the workers, etc.¹⁸ Under the conditions of economic abundance, the class differences are supposed to disappear and the interference of the state in social relation to become unnecessary. With the disappearance of classes the state functions are supposed to lose their political character and be "transformed into simple administrative functions of watching over the true interests of society." The state is to become dormant and wither away.

Social functions will therefore lose their political nature and become purely administrative only under full communism, that is, when the distinction between mental and physical labor has been eliminated, production has been increased to the highest possible degree, and social classes have disappeared. The transition to communism moves through three stages:

(a) the violent, purgative, stage of transformation under the dictatorship of the proletariat;

(b) the period of consolidation: this is the phase of socialism, or the lower phase of communism, the only form of society capable of achieving economic abundance. The dictatorship of the proletariat still exists. Its concrete embodiments are the Soviet state and the people's democratic states.

(c) the perfect society of communism, characterized by an economy of abundance, a society without contradictions, without classes, and without coercion, a true golden age.

Marx's concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat is fairly clear as far as the negative side of the transitional state is concerned:¹⁹ the proletariat,

18. Cf. Ivan Bystřina, "Některé otázky Leninovy theorie státu," *Stát a právo*, III (1957), p. 17.

19. Ramm classes Marx and Engels in the group of theorists of the transitional stage, together with Blanc, Proudhon, Rodbertus and Lasalle. In his work, *Die grossen Sozialisten*, Ramm makes a distinction between the theorists of the final stage (Endstadium) who are in the first instance concerned with the future socialist order, and the theorists of the transitional stage, (Übergangsstadium) who are primarily interested in the tactics, and the practical steps which are supposed to bring about the socialist order. In the first category belong, according to Ramm, the following

once in power and having no other class to exploit and to rule, would find the state unnecessary. Constructive ideas with regard to the government of the transitional period are lacking in the writings of Marx. Both Marx and Engels nevertheless indicated that the proletarian dictatorship would be organized as a communal council, with legislative and executive functions, and would be based on universal franchise. The Paris Commune of 1871 was the state form they had in mind. Measures once suggested in the *Communist Manifesto* as essential for the establishment of a proletarian dictatorship were declared antiquated with regard to the experience of the Paris Commune, "where the proletariat for the first time held political power for two whole months."²⁰ The activities of the Commune were to serve as an example for the proletariat to follow, and its mistakes should be avoided in the future.

It is open to question to what extent the celebrated Paris Commune was a workers' state. It certainly was not intended as such, and was actually an improvised organ of the city administration, combining legislative and executive functions. Although it was glorified by Marx and Engels as a prototype of the proletarian dictatorship, it had little to offer as socialism, except perhaps that it replaced bureaucracy by recallable officials serving at workers' wages. Lafargue even denied that it had anything to do with socialism, pointing out that the Commune was defended by the General Council of the International in which Marx and Engels had a decisive influence and from this it acquired socialist character which it never really had during its brief existence.²¹ Marx's initial attitude to the Commune was lukewarm if not entirely negative. Later on, however, the hostility of the European middle class and the more conservative elements of the workers' movement brought Marx to the defense of the Commune; in his *Civil War in France*, he identified the Commune with the International and thus made it "a part of communist legend."²² The fame of the Commune was created mainly by Lenin for whom it represented the most striking achievement of the working class prior to the Russian soviets. It goes without saying that

socialist thinkers: Babeuf, Saint-Simon, Fourier, Owen, Cabet and Weitling. He is aware that this classification is not perfect, and that, for example, Babeuf as tactician and organizer of the conspiracy belongs in the category of the theorists of the transitional stage as well; on the other hand, Saint-Simon was classed with the theorists of the final stage although his theory of the eventual order can be reconstructed only with considerable difficulty. The tacticians show a marked scepticism in regard to the description of the future socialist order or even openly prefer to stay away from such attempts. Thilo Ramm, *Die grossen Sozialisten als Rechts- und Sozialphilosophen* (Stuttgart: G. Fischer, 1955), Band 1., 1. Halbband, p. 26.

20. Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, I, p. 22.

21. Quoted in Karl Diehl, *Die Diktatur des Proletariats und das Rätssystem* (Jena: G. Fischer, 1920), p. 52.

22. Hunt, *The Theory and Practice of Communism*, p. 105.

the Commune during its brief existence had little chance to lay even the foundations of a new society.

Although there were sporadic attempts to identify people's democracy with a direct, plebiscitarian, government,²³ it would be absurd to compare with the Paris Commune the regimes which emerged in Eastern Europe at the end of World War II. While perhaps some affinity can be found between the Commune and the early Russian soviets, the people's democratic regimes never took a form of a direct government. The post-war national committees in Eastern Europe, though formally a replica of the Russian soviets, represented mere component parts in the overall governmental structure and were essentially lower organs of a communist-dominated executive hierarchy, rather than independent instruments of direct democracy along the lines of the Paris Commune.

The People's Democratic State: Instrument of Social Transformation

In the Marxist-Leninist theory of the state, each state form has its definite purpose. Though the state is originally created by the society, it becomes eventually a power set over and opposed to the society whose mere instrument it was intended to be. In the course of its development, the state established itself as an external power over its subjects, a coercive apparatus for the purpose of maintaining the suppression of one class by another. The Marxists maintain that every state form, prior to the establishment of the socialist state, had as sole purpose to suppress other classes in the interest of the dominant class. It is conceded that the proletarian state still is a coercive machinery, but its sole purpose is said to be the abolition of the exploitation of classes. According to the current theory, the people's democratic state, as a "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry," limited its activities to general democratic tasks and to the national liberation. As a "proletarian dictatorship" the people's democratic state assumes functions assigned to this particular form of government. The Marxist-Leninist theory assigns to the proletarian state three kinds of functions, which can be described as: coercive, educative and constructive. The coercive aspect includes the suppression of the former ruling classes and the defense of country; the educative aspect of the proletarian state is manifested in its endeavor to win the support of the non-proletarian masses for the cause of Marx-Leninist socialism; the constructive aspect aims at the building of socialism and abolition of classes.²⁴

23. See *infra*, p. 92.

24. N. G. Aleksandrov, "Nekotore voprosy teorii gosudarstva i prava v svete stalinskikh polozhenii o baze i nadstroike," *Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo*, No. 9 (1951), pp. 22-23. Cf. also N. G. Aleksandrov, *Voprosy gosudarstva i prava v svete truda I. V. Stalina, Marksizm i voprosy iazykoznaniiia* (Moskva: Izd.-vo Znanie, 1952), p. 7. The

When the people's democratic state reaches the stage of the dictatorship of the proletariat, it must follow essentially the pattern set by the Soviet state, because it is expected to fulfill the same functions as did the Soviet state in the first phase of its development.²⁵ If we want to investigate the functions of the people's democratic proletarian state, we must turn to the sources dealing with the functions of the Soviet state during the first comparable phase. The original scheme of functions elaborated by Stalin was changed and extended after his death. More emphasis was placed on the so-called "economic-organizational" and "cultural-educational" functions which Stalin minimized.²⁶ Nonetheless, repression still remains the purpose of the proletarian state, and is significantly mentioned in the first place.

In one of such post-Stalin schemes a distinction was made between internal and external functions of the Soviet state. The internal functions were described as follows: (1) Suppression of the resistance of the overthrown exploiting classes; (2) economic-organizational functions; (3) control of labor and consumption; (4) protection of the socialist property; (5) cultural-educational functions; (6) protection of the rights and lawful interests of the citizens. The external functions consist of the (1) defense of the peace and of the peaceful coexistence with the capitalist countries; and, (2) the military defense of the country against aggression from the outside.²⁷

The people's democratic state, as another form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, is supposed to carry out essentially the same functions, with certain modifications however, which are attributed to the more favorable situation of the people's democratic states. While the repression in the Soviet Union took the form of "military action," i.e., civil war, the people's democratic states applied repression in political and economic forms, especially through judicial and administrative actions.²⁸ The tendency to de-emphasize the role of violence in the people's democracies is common to all Soviet theorists. D. I. Chesnokov put it as follows:

On one hand, the peculiarities of the country's internal development, the relation of class forces, and the intensity of class contradictions, on the other,

development of the Soviet state is described in P. N. Galanza, "I. V. Stalin o fazakh razvitiia i funktsiakh sotsialisticheskogo gosudarstva," *Uchenye zapiski, Akademiia Obshchestvennykh Nauk pri Ts. K. V. K. P.* (b), *Katedra teorii gosudarstva i prava*. No. 8, 1951. See the German translation in *Sowjetische Beiträge zur Staats- und Rechtstheorie* (Berlin: Fortschritt und Kultur, 1953), p. 249.

25. Hilary Minc, "People's Democracy in Eastern Europe," *On People's Democracy in Eastern Europe and China; a Selection of Articles and Speeches* (London: Communist Party of Gt. Brit., 1951), p. 12.

26. V. V. Nikolaev, "O glavnykh etapakh razvitiia sovetskogo sotsialisticheskogo gosudarstva," *Voprosy filosofii*, No. 4 (1957), p. 17.

27. P. S. Romashkin, "Vývoj funkcí sovětského státu v procesu budování komunismu," *Právník*, xcvm, No. 1 (1959), p. 23.

28. V. F. Kotok, "K voprosu ob osnovnykh funktsiakh narodno-demokraticheskogo gosudarstva," *Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo*, No. 11 (1951), p. 45.

the specific nature of the international situation, determine the form, methods, and extent of the force employed by the proletariat against the exploiters. For the working class, force is not the goal, but solely the means for suppressing the resistance of the bourgeoisie and for consolidating the workers' state. The degree of force is determined mainly by the degree of the bourgeois resistance and its fury in the struggle with the proletariat and the working class in general.²⁹

In this interpretation, violence is a necessary evil, forced upon the proletariat by the resistance of the overthrown classes. In more recent years in particular, in connection with the Soviet doctrine of peaceful coexistence, the communist spokesmen often stress that the communist parties do not seek violence as a means toward achieving power.³⁰ Even the civil war resulting from the October Revolution is interpreted as something that was forced upon the Russian people. This was also emphasized by Khrushchev in his report to the Twentieth Congress:

In the conditions that arose in April 1917, Lenin granted the possibility that the Russian Revolution might develop peacefully, and... in the spring of 1918, after the victory of the October Revolution, Lenin drew up his famous plan for peaceful socialist construction. It is not our fault that the Russian and international bourgeoisie organized counter-revolution, intervention, and civil war against the young Soviet state and forced the workers and peasants to take up arms.

He went on to say that, in contrast to Russia of 1917, the situation in the European people's democratic states made it unnecessary for the proletariat to resort to a civil war.³¹

After the Twentieth Congress had adopted the resolution according to which "the use or non-use of violence in the transition to socialism depends not so much on the proletariat as on the degree of the resistance of the exploiters against the will of an overwhelming majority of the toilers and on whether the exploiters themselves resort to violence,"³² the notion of a non-violent path to socialism became a part of the communist doctrine of the revolution.³³

29. D. I. Chesnokov, "Lenin i Stalin o gosudarstvennoi forme diktatury proletariata," *Voprosy filosofii*, No. 3 (1948), pp. 59-60.

30. Cf. Josef M. Bochenski and Gerhart Niemeyer, *Handbuch des Weltkommunismus* (Freiburg: K. Alber, 1958), p. 118.

31. Nikita S. Khrushchev, *Report of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to the 20th Party Congress* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1956), p. 44.

32. *Kommunisticheskaia partiia Sovetskogo Soiuz. 20. s'ezd*, Moskva, 1956. *Resolutsii* (Moskva: Gos. Izd-vo Polit. Lit-ry, 1956), p. 13.

33. The communist electoral victory in Kerala (India) was called significantly a "revolution by consent." H. D. Malaviya, *Kerala: A Report to the Nation* (New Delhi: People's Pub. House, 1958), p. 21. The doctrine of the non-violent road to socialism was expounded in detail by Soviet writers, e.g., P. K. Figurnov, *Mirovaia sistema sotsializma* (Moskva: Gos. izd-vo polit. lit-ry, 1957), and A. I. Sobolev, esp. in his *Marksizm-Leninizm o formakh perekhoda ot kapitalizma k sotsializmu* (Moskva: Izd-vo Znanie, 1956).

The logical consequence of this new addition to the Marxian doctrine would be the view that, with the decrease of the "bourgeois resistance," the proletarian state would accordingly decrease the degree of repression. Weichelt expressed the opinion that the repressive and defensive functions of the proletarian state are not self-perpetuating and unchangeable, and that, during the transition period from capitalism to socialism, such functions should become less extensive and especially less permanent than the so-called "economic-organizational" and "cultural-educational" functions.³⁴ He also asserted that the repressive functions are necessary only where there is a real resistance of the overthrown exploiters against the workers' and peasants' rule. According to him, "such [repressive] functions could be justified only by large-scale attempts to restore capitalism or attempts to hinder socialist construction."³⁵ Weichelt's views were rejected as erroneous by Wolfgang Loose, a member of the Institute for Social Sciences at the Central Committee of the SED, who said:

The working class can fulfill its historic mission only if it always fully strengthens and develops the rule of the workers and peasants. The forcible suppression of the exploiters as a class is a vital step to this goal. However, the function of the internal repression cannot be reduced simply to force, or mainly force, but involves the broad concept of re-education. Since when can the class struggle be conducted just on one and not all fronts?³⁶

Views, somewhat similar to Weichelt's were expressed by a group of East German communists, led by Schirdewan, Wollweber and Ziller, who asserted that the policy of international relaxation pursued by the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic required also a relaxation of the state organs of power. These views were declared by Ulbricht to be fractionalist, and Schirdewan and his followers were accused of supporting the "subversive activities of the enemy," by trying to "juxtapose an opportunist line to the general line of the Party," with an intention "to alter the Party leadership."³⁷

It is interesting to note that, to some extent, similar views can also be

34. Wolfgang Weichelt, "Zu einigen Fragen der Funktionen des sozialistischen Staates," *Staat und Recht*, III, No. 1 (1957), p. 21.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

36. Wolfgang Loose, "Staatstheorie und revolutionäre Praxis," *Die Grosse sozialistische Oktoberrevolution, Ausgangspunkt und Basis der Verwandlung des Sozialismus in ein Weltsystem*. Protokoll der wissenschaftlichen Konferenz der Parteihochschule "Karl Marx" beim ZK der SED in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Institut für Gesellschaftswissenschaften beim ZK der SED und dem Institut für Marxismus-Leninismus beim ZK der SED, pp. 19-21, September 1957, in Berlin (Berlin: Dietz, 1958), p. 414.

37. Walter Ulbricht, "Report to the Central Committee of the SED, November 23-26, 1961." *Neues Deutschland*, (November 26 and 28, 1961). Abbreviated translation in *Diversity in International Communism; A Documentary Record, 1961-63*, edited by Alexander Dallin, with Jonathan Harris and Grey Hodnett for the Research Institute on Communist Affairs, Columbia University, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), pp. 354-355.

found in the writings of Sobolev, who said practically the same thing. In discussing problems of class struggle during the transitional period between capitalism and socialism, he made a distinction between the state where socialism had already been established, such as the Soviet Union, and the state where socialism is merely being built. He rejected as erroneous Stalin's thesis that the class struggle intensifies even after socialism had been attained, and held that, in those countries where socialism has already been achieved, the class struggle begins to diminish, and eventually disappears entirely. In the people's democracies, which are in the process of transition from bourgeois capitalism to socialism, the class struggle naturally still goes on, but its intensity depends on the actual situation:

In accordance with the degree of the liquidation of the capitalist elements, the class struggle diminishes; when the capitalist elements are fully liquidated, the class struggle as a historical necessity recedes, and disappears.

Sobolev added a qualifying remark: "The intensity of the class struggle between capitalism and socialism passes over onto the world scene, and acquires a world size." According to him, a certain degree of class struggle will still remain. In the field of ideology, the struggle will be conducted "not by penal methods, but by educational means."³⁸

In view of the continuing presence of classes in the people's democracies, it is difficult to imagine any slackening in the exercise of the coercive functions of the state, the more so since, even in the Soviet Union where classes presumably have been abolished, the coercive apparatus of the state continues to exist. Although the new Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union stresses the increasing importance of social organizations which are supposed to take over more and more of the state functions, it emphasizes that the functions of the soviets, trade unions and the courts, so far from being reduced are to be increased. Since the social functions are controlled by the ubiquitous party, whose role is to grow in importance during the transitional period from socialism to communism, there is little hope for a decrease in the coercive functions in either a people's democratic state or even of a socialist state such as the Soviet Union. At best the result would be a take-over of some state functions by communist party organs.³⁹

The doctrine that, under certain conditions, some capitalist countries may achieve socialism (*i.e.*, the Moscow brand of socialism) through parliamentary methods was proclaimed officially at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. To be sure, the parliamentary methods always played an important role in the communist strategy. It

38. A. I. Sobolev, *Marksizm-Leninizm o formakh perekhoda ot kapitalizma k sotsializmu* (Moskva: Izd. Znanie, 1956), p. 32.

39. "The Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Draft) 1961," in *The Communist Blueprint...*, pp. 224 ff. See also P. Romashkin, "Sotsialisticheskoe gosudarstvo i kommunisticheskoe samoupravlenie," *Partiinaiia zhizn*, No. 9 (May 1961), p. 16.

may be recalled that Lenin, in his *Left Wing Communism*, warned against underestimating the parliamentary ways in the struggle for power.⁴⁰ The popular front tactics of the 'thirties were another example of "parliamentary methods" for the communist seizure of power. The program of the Communist Party of Great Britain included an extensive passage on the importance of the parliamentary forms of the struggle for power and the strategy of the communist parties in highly developed capitalist countries.⁴¹

The official admission of the possibility of a parliamentary road to socialism by the Twentieth Congress gave to this method a high degree of ideological legitimacy, and thus introduced a new flexibility into the concept of transition. Khrushchev, in his report to the Congress, declared that the communist party in any capitalist country

by rallying around itself the toiling peasantry, the intelligentsia, all patriotic forces, and resolutely repulsing the opportunist elements who are incapable of giving up the policy of compromise with the capitalists and landlords, is in a position to defeat the reactionary forces opposed to the popular interest, to capture a stable majority in parliament, and transform the latter from an organ of bourgeois democracy into a genuine instrument of the people's will.⁴²

He made it clear that the communist parties can utilize any kind of strategy for the seizure of power, and no longer insisted on the classical "smashing of the bourgeois state." At the same time, however, he fully retained the name "dictatorship of the proletariat," and stressed that socialism can be achieved only through the leadership of the communist parties.

The notion that parliaments and coalitions may be used for the establishment of a proletarian state was consequently incorporated into the doctrine of people's democracy. It has always been stressed that one highly characteristic feature of the people's democratic state is the coexistence of other political parties side by side with the communist party. While in the Soviet system, with its insistence on the exclusive role of the communist party, no other political party was admitted, the people's democratic system, as elaborated by the Soviet and other communist theoreticians, provided a solution for the problem of maintaining a dictatorship based on a coalition.

According to Sobolev, the multiplicity of political parties in a people's democratic state is fully compatible with the notion of people's democracy.⁴³ Sobolev asserted further that, under certain conditions, a *parliamentary republic* may become a governmental form of the dictatorship of the proletariat.⁴⁴ This twist in the Marxist-Leninist theory of the state was only a logical consequence of the assertion that it is possible to employ the parlia-

40. Lenin, *Selected Works*, II, Part 2, pp. 380 ff.

41. *Bolshevik*, No. 3 (1951), p. 56.

42. Khrushchev, *Report of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to the 20th Party Congress*, p. 45.

43. Sobolev, "O zakonomernostiakh perekhoda ot kapitalizma k sotsializmu v evropeiskikh stranakh narodnoi demokratii," *Voprosy filosofii*, No. 1 (1965), p. 34.

44. Sobolev, *Marksizm-Leninizm o formakh perekhoda ot kapitalizma k sotsializmu*, p. 11.

mentary form for the transition to socialism. While an assertion that a parliamentary republic could eventually lead to the establishment of a dictatorship of the proletariat is compatible with the Leninist policy that democratic institutions should be utilized as instruments for the revolutionary struggle, it is difficult to imagine that a parliamentary republic itself can as such represent an embodiment of the proletarian dictatorship. If a parliamentary republic is to pose as a dictatorship of the proletariat, the whole concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat has been changed beyond recognition.

The notion of the legitimacy of the parliamentary road to socialism in the official Soviet theory of the state was an innovation of considerable magnitude, especially because some Soviet scholars have asserted that the parliamentary method was the pattern of the things to come. Sobolev held that,

the basic transformations in the international situation as well as the international conditions of the liberation movements in the capitalist countries have singled out the parliamentary form of the transition as the most effective one. Furthermore, with the growing successes of the socialist countries and increasing rallying of the people around the working class, the parliamentary form of the socialist revolution in the capitalist countries will become more and more important.⁴⁵

The doctrine of the legitimacy of the parliamentary road to socialism appears to be a new version of the popular front tactics advocated by the parties of the Communist International in the 'thirties, whose ostensible purpose was the unification of all "democratic elements" against the "dangers of fascism," but which also was expected to serve as a step in the offensive against capitalism, a preparatory stage to the proletarian and socialist revolution. It should be pointed out that Sobolev, in his emphasis on the importance of the parliamentary form of transition, went further than the official pronouncements, such as the resolutions of the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which were more cautious in tone. The purpose of the parliamentary road to socialism was obviously to facilitate the operations of foreign communist parties, especially those which are active in the colonial and quasi-colonial countries. The Soviet leaders realized, however, that, at that particular time, such statements could be misinterpreted by the revisionists in the satellite countries, and had to take steps to protect the orthodoxy of the communist ideology. If there were any misunderstandings resulting from the liberalizing pronouncements of the Twentieth Congress, they were dispelled by the restatement of the "basic laws of socialist construction" in the Declaration of the Communist and Workers' Parties of Socialist Countries, adopted at a meeting held in Moscow on November 14-16, 1957. Similarly, an editorial of the *Kommunist*, No. 2, 1958, emphatically recalled that the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU "rejected both, the dogmatic concept about the inevitability of force

45. A. I. Sobolev, "O parlamentskoi forme perekhoda k sotsializmu," *Kommunist*, xxxiii, No. 14 (1956), p. 32.

and the opportunistic concept that the class struggle in the capitalist countries gradually recedes thus facilitating an imperceptible transition into socialism."⁴⁶

Sobolev's somewhat premature advocacy of the parliamentary form of the transition to socialism was rejected at a plenary session of the Conference of the Chairmen of the Departments of Social Sciences of the Soviet Institutions of Higher Learning held on June 14-22, 1957, in Moscow. The main criticism was directed against his assertion that, in the future, the parliamentary form would be the most fruitful method for establishing socialism, and that it would become the universal and dominant form of the transition from capitalism to socialism. Sobolev was accused, although indirectly, of opportunistic and reformist deviation in that he failed to distinguish the basic difference between the revolutionary Marxist-Leninist, and the reformist concepts. He also was reminded that the parliamentary form was just one of the forms, possible only under certain conditions, and which could never be regarded as a dominant or exclusive form of transition to socialism.⁴⁷

The assertion that a parliamentary republic can be a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat is reminiscent of the early notion of people's democracy expounded by Eugene Varga in 1947. At that time, Varga asserted that a parliamentary democracy of a Western type might be a suitable form of government for the people's democratic states.⁴⁸ It will be recalled that this thesis was rejected in Dimitrov's official statement of the doctrine of people's democracy in 1948, and in subsequent theoretical writings.

An attempt to make parliamentary republic pose as a dictatorship of the proletariat in the people's democracies can only be explained by the Soviet trend toward expanding the notion of people's democracy to include new prospective candidates of socialism. For a while it seemed that the governments of the newly emerging nations could also be fitted under people's democracy, an experiment which preceded the present concept of "national democracy," which will be discussed later in this study.

The Soviet State and the People's Democratic State: The "Official" Differences

According to the Soviet theoreticians, all existing people's democracies have already reached the stage of the dictatorship of the proletariat; in

46. "Usilit borbu protiv burzhoaznoi i reformistskoi ideologii," *Kommunist*, xxxiv, No. 2 (1958), p. 9.

47. I. T. Vinogradov, "Stroitelstvo sotsializma v evropeiskikh stranakh narodnoi demokrati," *Materialy Vsesoiuznogo soveshchaniia zaveduiushchikh katedrami obshchestvennykh nauk* (Moskva: Gos. izd-vo polit. lit-ry, 1958), pp. 349-350.

48. See *supra*, pp. 18-19.

other words, the Soviet state and the people's democratic state are two different forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat, or, as it is often put, the Soviet Union and the people's democracies are indetical in essence but different in form.⁴⁹ It should be pointed out however, that, in communist ideology, it is often necessary to stress differences where there are none and, *vice versa*, to emphasize the identity of features even where there is little likeness. It is doubtful whether the much advertised differences between the two forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat are actual differences in reality. At any rate, in countries such as the Soviet Union and the people's democracies, slight differences in the formal structure of the governmental mechanism do not amount to much, since the essential element is always the actual location of power. In the Soviet Union as well as in the people's democracies the *locus potestatis* is the communist party, or a small oligarchy within that party, which enforces a rigid conformity by authoritarian and totalitarian measures. As a matter of fact, it is surprising that countries, which have at their disposal such effective means of social control as a monopolistic all-embracing ideology and a single party with a vast security apparatus, do not differ even more in the pattern of their governmental institutions, because they could easily afford more variety in the governmental mechanism which has so little to do with the reality of the actual power process. The differences between the Soviet state and the people's democratic state which are emphasized by the official Soviet theory are of little actual significance. This does not mean, however, that there are no important differences between the two. There are certainly very real distinctions between the Soviet Union and the people's democracies, although the official theory understandably keeps silent about them.

The first difference customarily stressed by the Soviet theorists is of an historical nature, and refers to the origins of the Soviet and the people's democratic states. It is pointed out that there was no stage of the joint dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry in Russia, because the revolution of February 1917, which overthrew the tsarist regime in a bourgeois-democratic revolution, was unable to establish a joint dictatorship. This is attributed to the fact that the Bolsheviks, who were prevented from entering the revolutionary government, were unable to manipulate the revolution "from above," and therefore had to organize a second revolution in the form of an armed uprising, which alone resulted in the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship.⁵⁰

The theorists of people's democracy see the next important difference

49. Cf. Hermann Kleyer, *Die marxistisch-leninistische Theorie des Staates und Rechts* (Berlin: Deutscher Zentralverlag, 1956), p. 104.

50. Figurnov, *Mirovaia sistema sotsializma*, p. 9. See also Akademiiia Nauk SSSR, Institut istorii et al. *Velikaia Oktiabr'skaia sotsialisticheskaia revoliutsiia; Dokumenty i materialy: Revoliutsionnoe dvizhenie v Rossii v aprele 1917 g. Aprelskii krizis* (Moskva, 1958), pp. IX-X.

between the Soviet state and the people's democratic state in the relative ease with which the people's democracies, protected by the Soviet Union, were able to build their governments as contrasted to the violent revolutionary road of the Soviet state. The protective and tutorial role of the Soviet Union in the formation of people's democracy is one of the fundamental issues of the theory. The origins of people's democracy are directly linked to the October Revolution in Russia and the rise of the Soviet power. The Soviet Union, through its victory, not only "accelerated the maturing of objective and subjective prerequisites for a new revolutionary outbreak,"⁵¹ but is said to have contributed in other ways to the establishment of people's democracy, e.g.:

(1) The Soviet armies brought with them a "living example of socialism."⁵² The influence of the Red Army on the political, economic and social developments of the countries in which the Soviet forces were stationed was frankly admitted:

The Soviet Army did not interfere in the domestic affairs of those countries, but by its presence it exerted a mighty revolutionary influence on the march of events, strengthened the revolutionary energy of the popular masses and accelerated historical processes.⁵³

Furthermore, the presence of Soviet armies in Central-Eastern Europe is said to have eliminated the Western influence from that area.

(2) The Soviet assistance manifested itself also in the destruction of the military forces of Germany's allies, (Rumania, Hungary and Slovakia), and thus cleared the way for the overthrow of the bourgeois regimes and establishment of the revolutionary governments in these countries.

(3) The Soviet Union extended to the people's democratic regimes in Europe as well as in China not only political and moral assistance, but also "huge economic aid."⁵⁴ This is a reference to the sporadic Soviet actions to relieve desperate food shortages by loans of grain in Eastern Europe, which conveniently overlooks the Russian plundering of the whole area, reparations, dismantling and removal of industrial equipment, draining of the war-impooverished countries in the form of contributions to the maintenance of Soviet occupation troops, and other forms of exploitation.

(4) The most important Soviet contribution is seen in the assistance offered in the form of a "rich experience in the struggle against landlords and capitalists, and in the struggle for building socialism."⁵⁵

The vital importance of the Soviet Union for the emergence of the people's democracies was fully acknowledged by the leaders of the national communist parties. So said Klement Gottwald:

51. Sobolev, *People's Democracy*..., pp. 15-16.

52. Sobolev, *Čhto takoe narodnaia demokratiia*, p. 15.

53. Sobolev, *People's Democracy*..., p. 18.

54. Sobolev, *Čhto takoe narodnaia demokratiia*, p. 16.

55. Sobolev, *People's Democracy*..., p. 22.

Everybody knows today that without a defeat of the Hitlerite Germany there would not have been any liberation of Europe from the Hitlerite yoke. The result of this recognition is an immense rise of prestige and power of the Soviet Union, a fact which is again favorable to us as a class, a nation or a country.⁵⁶

Boleslaw Bierut:

The working masses, the working class, and its political organizations had a class ally in the Soviet Army, an ally who liberated the nation from the yoke of Hitlerite slavery, an ally who by his very presence rendered powerless the camp of reaction and made it incapable of dealing by force of arms with the reactionary government. An ally who guaranteed that the imperialist powers would not decide the fate of a given country against the interests of the people.⁵⁷

Mao Tse-tung:

If the Soviet Union did not exist, or there had been no victory in the anti-fascist Second World War, no defeat of German, Italian and Japanese imperialism, and especially for us, no defeat of Japanese imperialism, if the various new democratic countries had not come into being, and no rising struggles of the oppressed nations in the East, if there had been no struggles of the masses of the people in the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and other capitalist countries against the reactionary cliques ruling over them, and if there had been no sum-total of these things, then the reactionary forces bearing down on us would surely be many times greater than they are at present. Could we have won victory under such circumstances? Obviously not; it would also be impossible to consolidate the victory even when it was won.⁵⁸

The emphasis on the role of the Soviet Union is central to the whole concept of people's democracy which no communist faithful to Moscow fails to acknowledge. Tito's refusal to give to the Soviet Union full credit for the liberation of Yugoslavia and his insistence that the foundations of the people's government in Yugoslavia were laid down by the Yugoslavs themselves, "when thousands of miles laid between...Yugoslavia and the Red Army which was at that time in retreat,"⁵⁹ has naturally contributed to the friction between the two countries.

There cannot be any doubt, of course, that the Soviet Union was primarily responsible for the emergence of the people's democratic system in Eastern Europe. The people's democratic systems arose in countries occupied by or within reach of the Soviet armies. It is significant that the only effective challenge to the present Soviet hegemony came from the countries which, like Yugoslavia and China, stood outside the physical control of the Soviet Union. In the West European countries outside the

56. Klement Gottwald, *Spisy* (Praha: SNPL, 1953), XII, p. 79.

57. In Hilary Minc and others, *On People's Democracy in Eastern Europe and China*, (London: Communist Party of Gt. Brit., 1951), p. 7.

58. Mao Tse-tung, "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship" (July 1, 1949) in Conrad Brandt, Benjamin Schwartz and John K. Fairbank, *Documentary History of Chinese Communism* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1952), p. 455.

59. Josip Broz Tito, *Workers Manage Factories in Yugoslavia* (Belgrade, 1950), pp. 14-15.

sphere of Soviet influence no people's democratic system came into existence, although there is ample evidence that the local communists planned some sort of a communist government after World War II also in those areas.⁶⁰

With the exception of Yugoslavia, the establishment of the people's democratic regimes in Europe depended essentially on direct Soviet support, as was also frankly confirmed by Sobolev:

As is known, people's democracy did not triumph in some countries, though internal conditions were favorable there. The internal situations in Greece, France, Italy, Belgium, and in other states permitted the laboring masses in those countries to throw off the domination of reaction and establish people's democracy, but the U.S.-British imperialist interference helped the native bourgeoisie to retain their dominant position.⁶¹

Sobolev is, in effect, saying that the local communists in Greece, France, Italy, etc., could have seized power if the forces of the Western allies had not been present in those areas. This statement is, of course, a pure conjecture. There is no proof whatsoever that the communist parties were in a position to seize power in those countries without outside help from the Soviet armies. The abortive communist rebellion in Greece has clearly shown the incapacity of the local communists to seize power without direct Soviet support. According to Borkenau, the attempt to conquer liberated countries by armed risings *without* the support of Russian troops was given up after the communist defeat in Greece, and communist revolutionary actions were henceforward restricted to those parts of Eastern Europe which were occupied by Russian troops. Borkenau even doubts the sincerity of the communist uprising in Greece: "It is clear from the absence of all open Soviet support that even in Greece the rising was never more than an experiment, and it may be surmised that the experiment was undertaken as a concession to the war party, not perhaps without the expectation that it would fail and thus oblige even the greatest optimist in the Russian politburo that at the moment tactics of violence were unsuitable in areas occupied by the armies of the West."⁶²

The Soviet Union, as well as the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, are depicted as some sort of a permanent shield sheltering the people's democratic states so that they could "live and grow in security and happiness." According to Soviet scholars, the protection extended to people's democracies by the Soviet Union, not only resulted in a peaceful establish-

60. A. Rossi describes the plans of the French communists to establish a communist government in France under various names, such as "people's government," "workers and peasants government," or simple "workers' government." A special issue of the *Humanité* of February, 1940, demanded a soviet type of government for France under the slogan: "Soviets everywhere, Thorez to power!" A. Rossi, *Les communistes français pendant le drôle de guerre* (Paris: Les Iles d'or, 1951), p. 267. See also Franz Borkenau, *European Communism*, Chapters xvii and xviii.

61. Sobolev, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

62. Borkenau, *European Communism*, pp. 452-53.

ment of people's democratic states, but made unnecessary ideological retreats such as was the NEP in the Soviet Union.⁶³

The continued emphasis on the Soviet contribution to the formation and the progress of the people's democracies has a specific meaning. It was apparently intended to impress the uncommitted nations in Asia and Africa with the successes of the Soviet system attributed to the effectiveness of socialism. The developing countries are exhorted to adopt the "socialist" way, i.e., a political and economic system modeled on the Soviet example. If they choose to do so, they are promised a rapid industrial growth without the vicissitudes of capitalism.⁶⁴

The emphasis on the protective role of the Soviet Union with respect to the people's democracies was also intended to imply a status of historical inequality of the people's democracies in relation to the Soviet Union. By admitting that people's democracy is a legitimate course toward socialism, the Soviet Union actually opened the way to a belief that socialism can be duplicated in the people's democratic countries. Implicit in such a belief would be the contention that a communist state, which has built socialism by imitating the Soviet example, is not necessarily dependent on its master either politically or economically. The exalting of the Soviet role in the theory of people's democracy was clearly meant as a reminder that the Soviet support was a mainstay without which the people's democracies could not exist, and that the Soviet Union's friendship was a *sine qua non* for the survival of the satellite nations. The emphasis on the Soviet contribution implied that the Soviet Union was the stronger, more experienced member of the socialist commonwealth, whereas people's democracies were junior partners who needed the protection. The question of the further development of this partnership remains somewhat open. Will the Soviet Union continue to play the role of a politically and economically superior partner, or can the people's democracies catch up or overtake the senior member? The rapid progress toward socialism registered by countries like Czechoslovakia and Rumania could set primacy in doubt. Political realities, however, do not seem to indicate that, for the time being, the people's democracies are likely to overtake the Soviet Union. While they are still trying to reach the lower stage of socialism or, like Czechoslovakia and Rumania, have just reached it, the senior partner is said to be already moving toward communism. The status of historical inequality on the part of the people's democracies is bound to persist as long as the Soviet Union remains strong enough to enforce its ideological and political superiority.

The tendency to stress how "easy" was the path of the people's democracies toward socialism as contrasted to the "hard way" of the Soviet Union could lead to a conclusion that people's democracy is a somewhat relaxed

63. L. Gatovskii, "Ob obshchikh zakonomernostiakh i osobennostiakh stroitelstva sotsializma v raznykh stranakh, *Voprosy ekonomiki*, No. 12 (1957), pp. 14-15.

64. *Ibid*, p. 16.

form of a socialist state. The theoreticians of people's democracy, well aware of the possibility of such an interpretation, warn that this would be an erroneous conclusion, because there are still many dangers for the people's democracies which could hinder their progress toward socialism. It is held that whereas in the Soviet Union the dictatorship of the proletariat "swept away and shattered rapidly and radically the machine of the bourgeois state, bourgeois political formations, bourgeois norms and legal regulations, the privileged positions of the church hierarchy, etc.," the people's democracies were unable to carry out "immediately and finally" the task of clearing the ground for socialist construction, so that a "forcible suppression of the overthrown classes of exploiters" became inevitable, and no relaxation of the struggle was possible.⁶⁵

The most important characteristic feature of the people's democratic state is the coexistence of various political parties and its corollary, the institution of the so-called "people's front." In this respect, the people's democracies differ from the Soviet Union where the monopoly of the Bolshevik Party was firmly established at an early stage. The principle of the plurality of political parties adopted by the people's democracies is also the only real difference from the Soviet Union which has some significance. The multi-party system of the people's democracies has its historical justification. The plurality of political parties in Eastern and Central Europe has been a common phenomenon in that part of the world, many of the parties having been economic interest parties. The circumstances after World War II were favorable to the preservation of the multiple party system mainly because the communists were anxious to enlist the support of the non-communist parties for the promotion of their own interests,⁶⁶ often carefully hidden behind the slogans of a common struggle for the national liberation and demands for a united front necessary for an economic recovery. The people's democracies, during the initial stage at least, represented an intermediate stage between the political monism of the Soviet Union and the political pluralism of the bourgeois democracies. It goes without saying that pluralism of the people's democracies differs considerably from the established liberal concept. While in the Western democracies the participation in the political life is open to all, or nearly all political parties, political pluralism in the people's democracies is strictly selective. Only those parties which profess to defend the workers' and peasants' interest are allowed to exist, *if the communists find them acceptable*. Their subservience to the communist parties is usually assured by the acceptance of a common program prepared in detail by the communists, such as the

65. Minc, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

66. In the communist jargon this phenomenon is called the "extension of the social basis of the revolution," cf. A. I. Sobolev, "O zakonmernostiakh perekhoda ot kapitalizma k sotsializmu v evropeiskikh stranakh narodnoi demokratii," *Voprosy filosofii*, No. 1 (1956), p. 33.

Košice Program of 1945, which was called by Gottwald and other Czechoslovak communists "The Magna Charta of Czechoslovak people's democracy."⁶⁷ As a rule, the political parties of the people's democracies were united in the so-called "national fronts" under a variety of names. All these fronts came into existence during World War II for the ostensible purpose of resistance against the Nazi and Fascist occupation. Communist authors do not even try to deny that the fronts were completely dominated by the communist parties.⁶⁸

Communist writers make a distinction between the people's front and people's democracy; the former is still a bourgeois government, whereas the latter is already a form of the proletarian dictatorship.⁶⁹ The relationship between the people's front and the people's democratic government was formally defined as follows:

The people's front is an organized power on which the government leans, and which helps the government to carry out its policy.⁷⁰

The national fronts of the first phase were coalitions of various political parties, rather loose organizations in which the member parties were represented on a parity basis. They subsequently became tighter and more disciplined, and the leading role of the communist parties became even more stringent. The system of an equal party representation was abandoned and replaced by a "direct election" of the candidates who were chosen from among the persons "enjoying the highest prestige and approval of the people"⁷¹ which means that the individual candidates from the non-communist parties were selected for the single ticket only by the communist party.

Although the non-communist parties in a people's democratic state as a rule were united with the communists in some sort of popular front, the Soviet theory of people's democracy for a while recognized the possibility that certain parties may remain outside the popular front. As an example, Farberov mentioned two insignificant political parties in Rumania, Lupu's

67. Radim Foustka, "Otázky státu a práva v šestém svazku Sebraných spisů Klementa Gottwalda," *Právník*, xcii (May, 1953), p. 296.

68. According to communist authors, the leadership of the communist party in a people's front is the prerequisite for an effective operation of the front. Foster points out that the struggle for socialism in the United States may take its course through the people's front (as in France, Spain and Chile) or through people's democracy (as in Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Rumania and Albania) or both. According to him, socialism could be established here also directly by setting up a socialist government, as the Russian workers did. William Z. Foster, *Outline Political History of the Americas*, p. 609. If the method of the people's front is used, Foster emphasizes, "the people's front must be under the general leadership of the working class and the workers must possess a powerful Communist Party," *Ibid.*, p. 669.

69. Foster, *op. cit.*, p. 609.

70. Farberov, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

71. *Ibid.*, p. 60.

Christian-Democratic Party and Bejan's National-Liberal Party, and called them "parties of the opposition." These parties were allowed to have their own candidates in the elections and were permitted to express their opinion in the deliberations of the legislative bodies provided they were "loyal to the people."⁷² With the communist party in the role of the sole interpreter of the concept of loyalty, the extent of this freedom was naturally limited.

The doctrine of the legitimacy of the parliamentary road to socialism, promulgated by the resolutions of the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, gave a new lease on life to the principle of the plurality of political parties in the people's democracies. Though it is understood that the trend toward the elimination of the multiplicity of parties is to continue,⁷³ the political parties in countries which are good prospects for the establishment of the people's democratic system were assured that they have nothing to fear as long as they are ready to collaborate with the communist parties. Sobolev has underscored the importance of the plurality of the political parties for the construction of socialism in the following statement:

One of the greatest accomplishments of peoples democracy, which indeed has a world-wide importance, lies in the fact that it has proved the feasibility of establishing, under certain conditions, a dictatorship of the proletariat in the presence of other (non-proletarian) political parties. Those non-communist parties, who, in a decisive manner broke off with the bourgeoisie and supported effectively the interests of the toilers, have preserved their right of existence. It goes without saying that the importance of this fact reaches far beyond the framework of the people's democratic countries.⁷⁴

This, of course, applies to countries in which a people's democratic system is to be established in the future. The existing people's democracies, are moving toward the disappearance of the plurality of political parties.⁷⁵

The emergence of the political system of people's democracy confronted the communists with the problems of reconciling the idea of the proletarian dictatorship with the pluralism of political parties. The dictatorship of the proletariat has played a central role in the Marxist-Leninist ideology, and is therefore the essential element of every Marxist-Leninist state, be it a Soviet state or a people's democratic state. By definition, a dictatorship implies a single and uniform policy; as such, it stands in an apparent contradiction to the concept of a plurality of political parties which, in the

72. *Ibid.*, p. 64.

73. A. I. Sobolev, "O zakonomernostiakh perekhoda ot kapitalizma k sotsializmu," p. 33.

74. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

75. Sobolev gives Bulgaria as an example where there were five political parties at the time of the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In 1956, only the Communist Party of Bulgaria and the Bulgarian National Agrarian Union remained. *Ibid.*, p. 33.

Marxist analysis, always represent the conflicting interests of different social classes. A multiple party system thus indicates the presence of a multiplicity of class interests. The answer to the problem was found in the theory that as long as the people's democratic states stand "under the leadership" of the "working class," *i.e.*, the communist party, the existence of other political parties represents no danger for the proletarian dictatorship.

The absolute predominance of the communist party in the political system of people's democracy has always been recognized as an essential condition, both in theory and in practice. Both Lenin and Stalin had stressed with great emphasis that the proletarian dictatorship presupposes full control of political power by the working class guided by its vanguard, the communist party.

As to the actual situation, the countries of Eastern Europe were ruled, at the end of 1945, by radical left-wing coalitions which were not entirely communistic, but in which the communists clearly represented the dominant and most dynamic element. In the course of some two and a half years after the end of World War II, the communist parties made a systematic effort to establish themselves firmly in power,⁷⁶ a process which was accomplished sometime between the second half of 1947 and the first half of 1948, when "the proletarian power had been completely victorious" in Eastern Europe.⁷⁷ The non-communist political parties, which never carried very much weight in the communist-ruled coalitions, were finally reduced to mere instruments for carrying the communist control over certain strata of the population otherwise outside of the easy reach of the communist parties. Pluralism of political parties in the people's democracies is a myth which the communist are anxious to keep alive. This was implicitly admitted by Sobolev who pointed out that the "other laboring classes" in the people's democracies were drawn into participation in the state administration primarily for the purpose of promoting the "national interests."⁷⁸ In other words, the communists accept the collaboration of non-communist parties temporarily, usually only for the purpose of overthrowing the existing, hostile regime. At that stage, a coalition government uniting the communists and non-communists may be more or less genuine. When the revolutionary regime has seized power, however, this precarious coalition changes into an obvious *societas leonina* in which the communist party becomes all-powerful, and imposes its absolute solution over the heads of its former partners, or, in Sobolev's words:

76. The communist writers underscore the continuous effort to attain "hegemony" during that period. Cf. I. P. Trainin, "Demokratiia osobogo tipa." *Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo*, No. 1 (1947), p. 13. See also Julius Bránik, *Hospodarské základy ľudovej demokracie* (Bratislava: Slovenská Akadémie vied a umení, 1950), p. 5.

77. Farberov, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

78. Sobolev, *People's Democracy*..., p. 113.

... The coalition character of the government does not mean that the working class is sharing its power. The working class does not and cannot share its power with anybody; it establishes and exercises undivided domination in political life.⁷⁹

It would be premature to speculate, at this time, about the future development of the political form of people's democracy. Despite the growing nationalistic tendencies in the people's democracies, and their increasing awareness of the historical continuity between the present and the pre-revolutionary era, it is unlikely that the people's democratic countries of Eastern Europe would adopt a state form different from the present communist dictatorship, because their professed goal is a gradual identification of their system with that of the Soviet Union, *i.e.*, they hope to overcome the "historical delay," and to reach the same stage of development as the Soviet Union. In form, they will retain the political system of a proletarian dictatorship as long as they "build socialism." The proletarian dictatorship will continue to exist even after the people's democracies will have reached the stage of full socialism. Since the political and social development of the Soviet Union is still supposed to be an example for the people's democracies, they are expected to reach, sometime in the future, the developmental form which has been now attained by their teacher and master, *i.e.*, the so-called "government of all the people," a peculiar form of government which, according to the recent Soviet doctrinal innovation, succeeds the dictatorship of the proletariat, and continues to exist until its complete disappearance in the stage of full communism.

CHAPTER IV

MATERIAL AND FORMAL SOURCES OF PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY

Political Structure

The writings of Marx and Engels and, particularly, those of Lenin and Stalin, are the principal material source of the communist theory of the state. The Soviet state and the people's democratic state are at present the two representative forms of the contemporary political system of autocracy dominated by the proletarian ideology. It is this ideology which primarily determines the concrete institutionalization of the communist political system. Some important institutions of the communist system can also be traced back to the French revolutionary experience. The dictatorship instituted by the Convention of 1793, where the democratically elected assembly became a single power holder, served as a prototype for the assembly government embodied in the contemporary communist constitutions.¹ The assembly government, the *gouvernement conventionnel*, is a form of parliamentary absolutism,² a legislative assembly which is popularly elected, exercises an unlimited supremacy over all other organs of the state, and is subject only to the electorate which renews its mandate at regular intervals.³ The legislature, as a power of the majority, is the undisputed master of the executive. This kind of government was adopted by the Stalin Constitution of 1936, and later by the people's democratic constitutions. The reason why this form of government was chosen by the communists may be its outwardly super-democratic character which fits well together with the concept of popular rule. Moreover, since a huge assembly is incapable of effective action, it is usually conducive to a usurpation of power by a small determined group, such as the communist party.

The Paris Commune of 1871 also played an important role in the shaping of the doctrine of the proletarian state of which people's democracy is the recent embodiment.

The first real attempt to legalize a proletarian state was made by the

1. Cf. Michel-Henry Fabre, *Théorie des démocraties populaires* (Paris: A. Pedone, 1950), p. 16.

2. Hans Nawiasky, *Staatsideenlehre* (Neusiedeln: Benziger, 1958), p. 88.

3. Karl Loewenstein, *Political Power and the Governmental Process* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 81.

Russian constitutions of 1918 and 1924. Its final legal embodiment took place in the Soviet Constitution of 1936, which, in turn, served as a model for the constitutions of the people's democracies.

While the ideological writings of the Marxist classics are the principal material source for the theory of people's democracy, its formal sources are to be sought in the constitutions of the various people's democratic states. The flexibility of the concept of people's democracy during its initial stage made it possible that the people's democratic state could be fitted into the existing constitutions which came into force a long time ago, during the "bourgeois" era. Thus, people's democracy in Poland was mounted, without much difficulty, on the old Constitution of March 17, 1921. In Czechoslovakia, the Constitution of February 29, 1920, adapted to the changed situation by a number of provisional presidential decrees of doubtful constitutional validity, became the legal basis for the new democracy. Similarly, the Bulgarian Constitution of April 16, 1879, and the Rumanian Constitution of March, 1923, formed the constitutional basis of people's democracy in Bulgaria and Rumania, respectively. In Rumania was found an interesting phenomenon in that people's democracy here was established under a monarchy, which is somewhat reminiscent of the first stage of the Mongolian People's State. For a short while, the monarchical form was also respected in Yugoslavia as a result of the Tito-Šubašić agreement of November 1, 1944. This, of course, was possible only during the initial stage of people's democracy. Soon afterwards the provisional constitutions were replaced by new ones, closely modeled on the Soviet Constitution, with Yugoslavia leading the line with its Soviet-like Constitution of January 31, 1946, and followed immediately by Albania with its Constitution of March 15, 1946.

All the constitutions adopted by the people's democracies were very much alike, and they all, with the possible exception of Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic, closely followed the Soviet example.

The people's democracies have adopted the Soviet concept of the constitution according to which the constitution should be "the embodiment of what has really been achieved and won in actual fact,"⁴ rather than a program for future action. While every constitution in the established Western conception embodies the current political, social and economic trends, and is a product of the accumulated material and spiritual circumstances of its time, it serves primarily as a scheme of organs and methods by which the state is to act and a statement of purposes for which it is to act in the future. It is thus simultaneously a frame of government and a declaration of rights. In communist countries the constitutions are supposed to mirror the class relationships at the time when the constitution was written. The communist writers admit that, in view of the "rapid develop-

4. I. V. Stalin, "On the Draft Constitution of 1936," *Problems of Leninism* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1954), p. 701.

ment of the people's democracies toward socialism, certain provisions regarding the socio-economic structure and the relationship of classes become obsolete."⁵ In other words, the constitutions of the people's democratic states are subject to a continuous process of informal amendment during which the changes are made by decree, and only later are the constitutions brought into conformity with a new situation.

The communist constitutional jurists reject the notion that the constitution is a political program for the future. They point out that "the constitution of a state which is building socialism cannot and must not be confused with the political program for future action, because the constitution is solely a record of what has already been achieved, during the period of the construction of socialism in a fierce class struggle."⁶

Needless to say, the real importance of the constitution in a people's democratic state should not be overestimated. Like the Soviet Constitution or, for that matter, any constitution in an authoritarian and totalitarian state, it is not much more than a functional frame for the conduct of administration by the ruling oligarchy. The Western concept of the constitution as the essential instrumentality for control of political power is entirely alien to the communists. The creation and application of law is here entirely in the hands of small oligarchies who can always bring about legislation and legal interpretation desired by the country's political leaders. The constitutions of the people's democracies, are indeed "semantic" constitutions, in the sense that they solely formalize the existing location of political power "for the exclusive benefit of the actual power holders in control of the enforcement machinery of the state."⁷ A communist writer quite accurately called such constitutions "instruments of class struggle."⁸

The communist constitutions simply register the factual power configuration and, instead of being instruments for the limitation of political power, they formally stabilize the system of assembly government in which the communist parties *de facto* determine the actual policy pursued by the organs of the state.

The Principle of Assembly Government in the People's Democracies

Despite the limited importance of the constitutions in the communist political system, their analysis and comparison may provide some useful information with respect to the implementation of the basic philosophy

5. Martin Lupták, "Stalinská ústava a ústavy ľudovo-demokratických štátov," *Ža socialistický štát*, No. 6 (1951), p. 608.

6. Bedřich Ráttinger, "Stalinská ústava a ústavní vývoj lidově-demokratického Československa," *Ža socialistický štát*, No. 6 (1951), p. 595.

7. Loewenstein, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

8. Lupták, *op. cit.*, p. 604.

underlying the notion of people's democracy, and its concrete institutionalization. It will be seen from such a comparison that the system of assembly government has not always been carried out in its entirety where the local conditions seemed to require a certain degree of diversity.

By definition, the principle of assembly government is incompatible with any restraints upon the sovereign legislative assembly. While in the Western democracies the constitutions stand above the parliament, in the people's democracies the legislative assembly formally stands above the constitution. Though the constitutions establish certain procedures for constitutional amendments, the legislative assembly remains an undisputed master of the constitution. As a rule, the only requirement is a qualified majority in the legislative assembly and a certain procedure concerning the initiative.⁹

No special organ is provided for the control of the constitutionality of the laws passed by the legislative assembly.¹⁰ Such control is entirely in the hands of the legislative assembly or of a body which is appointed by or responsible to the legislative assembly.¹¹ On the other hand, constitutions of the people's democratic countries contain provisions which entrust the presidium of the legislative assembly with the control of legality and constitutionality of decisions made by various organs of the state.¹² This type of constitutional control is designed to protect the legislative assembly against the abuse of other organs of the state rather than to protect the citizen against excesses of the legislative. The system actually strengthens the omnipotence of the parliament instead of limiting it in the interest of the citizens.

The constitutions of the people's democracies followed the Soviet model and avoided the initial cult of direct democracy. Like the Soviet Union in 1936, the people's democracies, too, have departed from the original ideal of the soviets which were supposed to represent a direct democracy practiced by the workers in their meetings, and moved in the direction of parliamentarism, with constituencies electing their representatives on the basis of a

9. Cf. Chapter XIII of the Soviet Constitution of 1936; Article 56 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Albania of 1950; Article 91 of the Constitution of the Polish People's Republic (succeeding Article 3 of the so-called Little Constitution of 1947); Article 99 of the Constitution of the Bulgarian People's Republic of 1947; Article 105 of the Constitution of the Rumanian People's Republic of 1952; Sect. 54 of the Constitution of the Czechoslovak Republic of 1948; Article 15 of the Hungarian People's Republic of 1949; Article 83 of the Constitution of the German Democratic Republic of 1949. Texts of the constitutions in Pavel Peška, *Ústavy lidově demokratických zemí* (Praha: Orbis, 1954), and Deutsches Institut für Rechtswissenschaft, *Die Verfassungen der europäischen Länder der Volksdemokratie* (Mehrsprachige Ausg. Berlin: Deutscher Zentralverlag, 1953).

10. e.g., Art. 25 of the Bulgarian Constitution.

11. Article 66 (3) of the Constitution of the German Democratic Republic; Sec. 65 of the Czechoslovak Constitution of 1948.

12. e.g., Art. 20, 2, of the Hungarian Constitution; Art. 37, c, of the Rumanian Constitution of 1952.

universal and equal suffrage, and a system of, at least formally, secret voting. Though the national or people's committees—an equivalent of the Russian soviets—still exist and are duly exalted in the constitutions of the people's democracies, they are far from the ideal of the omniscient bodies of workers endowed with both legislative and executive powers and undisturbed by an independent judiciary. The people's democracies substituted in their place a parliamentary, representative system, and adopted the conception of a differentiated state with different spheres and different organs of action, with the legislative assembly as the supreme organ.¹³ This of course does not mean that the people's democracies recognize the doctrine of separation of powers, with the judiciary as a check upon the legislature and executive. On the contrary, the people's democracies formally discarded the concept of separation of powers, although they still recognized the necessity of separating functions. Boleslaw Bierut, in his address upon the occasion of the promulgation of the new Polish Constitution which has abolished the institution of the President, declared the system of separation of powers as "artificial and contrary to the principles of democracy," and emphasized that the new constitution gave to all state organs from bottom up a uniform character.¹⁴

Yet, as noted, it would be wrong to assume that the supremacy of the legislative assembly and the rejection of the separation of power was complete in all people's democracies. Thus, in Czechoslovakia, the President of the Republic, according to the 1948 Constitution, was endowed with real powers. His office was in fact more powerful than was that of the President of the Fourth French Republic.¹⁵ The new socialist constitution of 1960 preserved the institution of the President, though it somewhat curtailed presidential powers as compared to those granted by the earlier, people's democratic, constitution of 1948. The 1949 Constitution of the German Democratic Republic, too, preserved the institution of the President though the constitutional powers of the President were definitely less impressive than those of the President of the Czechoslovak Republic.¹⁶

13. Art. 15 of the Polish Constitution; Art. 22 of the Rumanian Constitution of 1952; Art. 10 of the Hungarian Constitution; Art. 41 of the Albanian Constitution; Art. 50 of the Constitution of the German Democratic Republic; Art. 32 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Korea; Art. 13 of the Constitution of the Mongolian People's Republic. No comparable provision in the Czechoslovak Constitution of 1948.

14. Boleslaw Bierut, "O návrhu ústavy Polské lidové republiky," *Za trvalý mír, za lidovou demokracii*, No. 30 (July 25, 1952).

15. The functions and powers of the President are enumerated in Sec. 74 of the 1948 Constitution. The provision of Sec. 74, No. 3 gave to the President the power to dissolve the National Assembly. The prerogatives of the President of the GDR were mostly of formal nature, Art. 101-108 of the Constitution.

16. The German Democratic Republic no longer has a single-person-presidency. After President Wilhelm Pieck's death on September 7, 1960, the Volkskammer

*Constitutions of the People's Democracies as Instruments Toward Genuine
Citizens' Republics?*

Although the people's democratic constitutions are supposed to represent a concrete institutionalization of the proletarian ideology in its most recent form, it should be again pointed out that such a formal institutionalization tells very little about the actual location of governmental power in a people's democratic state. Instead, the ruling communist oligarchy is the real power holder. Does this mean that the constitutions are a mere irrelevant façade? The constitutions of the people's democracies contain a considerable amount of genuinely democratic forms, and so does the Soviet Constitution. These democratic forms, however, are not functioning at the present time. There is a school of thought which seems to suggest that the present obstacles which stand in the way of complete democratic functioning of the people's democratic (and Soviet) institutions may be removed some day, and that the outwardly democratic forms may then get a real democratic content.

approved an amendment to the Constitution providing for a State Council under the chairmanship of Walter Ulbricht, who was elected on September 12, 1960. The preservation of the individual presidency in Czechoslovakia was perhaps intended for foreign consumption as much as for domestic use. It apparently served as a convenient example of the "variety of roads to socialism," and as a concession to the Czechoslovak national tradition. The first president, Thomas G. Masaryk, was the founder of the republic; Eduard Beneš, his successor, became a national symbol of anti-Nazi resistance as president and actual head of the Czechoslovak government-in-exile during World War II. The communists continued in this tradition by making Klement Gottwald president after Beneš's resignation in 1948. Gottwald's successor in this office, Antonín Zápotocký, was a man of considerable popularity among the Czechoslovak workers, which also contributed to the traditional prestige of the office. The following president, Antonín Novotný, was simultaneously the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and Number One man in the Party hierarchy. The reasons for preserving the institution of the individual presidency in East Germany were apparently connected with the original plans for an eventual unification of Germany under the communist rule.

The institution of the president was preserved also in other republics, such as the People's Republic of China, the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, and the Federal Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia, the People's Republic of Zanzibar (1964) also had a President. In the People's Republic of the Congo (Stanleyville), Christophe Gbenye combined the function of the President with that of the Prime Minister (Article 2, Décret-loi du 5 septembre 1964. Text of the Law in: Centre de recherche et d'information socio-politiques, Bruxelles and Institut national d'études politiques, Leopoldville-Kinshasa, *Congo 1964* (Bruxelles, 1965), p. 267-268). The Republic of Cuba also has the institution of the President. The Algerian Democratic and Popular Republic has a single-person presidency (Article 39 of the Constitution of September 10, 1963). In the Arab countries the institution of the president is in full conformity with the concept of strong executive. An authoritarian, centralized rule was established throughout the Arab world. Even republican Tunisia is, for all practical purposes, a centralized, authoritarian government, with the President's power limited only by the political structure of the leading party.

A genuinely democratic process would then begin to operate under the same constitutions and available political institutions. This view is a part of a broader theory which is generally sceptical of the permanence of all anti-personal systems such as that of communism. The adherents of this theory believe that the political developments in Russia (and presumably in all communist-controlled countries) will follow the line which is just emerging in the field of science and technology where the free access to information cannot much longer be denied, and where the scientists must eventually be granted freedom to deal rationally with current problems. It is held that ideology will gradually yield to the men who are competent and capable of improving the overall standard of living in Russia. It is expected that the trend will also set in in politics, and that the future development will follow the line of progressive democratization of political life and eventual establishment of a settled society. This school of thought seems to believe that Soviet communism will evolve into some sort of economic competition aimed at outstripping the West in the production field. The political and social system which presumably would be established by this brand of socialism would still be based on the state ownership of the means of production but otherwise would not essentially differ from liberal democracy. The adherents of this school seem reconciled to the communist one-party rule hoping perhaps that intra-party democracy would compensate for the lack of a plurality of political parties. At the opposite pole is a school of thought which holds that there is no chance that the oppressive system of communism could ever gradually disappear by itself. According to this school, the change can come only in the form of another revolution or through a military defeat of the communists. In other words, there is a difference of opinion on whether the communist methods including such devices as a rule of a single party, propaganda, and police, are merely passing phenomena accompanying an ambitious and hasty goal of industrialization, or whether the industrial effort, and the ideology are mere instruments of a total tyranny which is the true aim of the ruling group.¹⁷ While the first school is in favor of a less rigid approach to the international problems with regard to the USSR, the second one demands a "tough" line. In terms of foreign policy, the advocates of the first mentioned school of thought have developed a number of approaches which can be briefly mentioned here:

- (a) The "evolutionary" theory which holds that the nations of the Soviet orbit will eventually follow their own non-communist courses independently of Moscow;
- (b) The "accommodation" theory, according to which it will be possible to reach, for the West, in a thus far unspecified way, an agreement with the communist governments which would preserve the present *status quo*. The

17. Raymond Aron and others, *Colloques de Rheinfelden* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1960), p. 22.

proponents of this theory find a considerable encouragement in the Soviet doctrine of coexistence which they take at its face value, and disregard the Soviet claims that the doctrine is a mere temporary expedient designed to bring about the final victory of communism by non-military means;

(c) The "reduction of tensions" theory, which advocates a policy of avoidance of everything which the communist governments could regard as provocative.

The second school of thought doubts the truthfulness of the peaceful intentions of the Soviet Union and of the communist governments in general, demands military preparedness, and is sceptical of the value of the United Nations as an instrument for the preservation of an honorable peace. It is not the purpose of the present study to pass judgment upon either of these theories. However, it seems doubtful that the communist long-range aims could be reduced to a mere economic competition with the West. As Raymond Aron has pointed out, Marxism-Leninism cannot very well abandon its messianistic appeal by limiting its aims to a formula of "catching up with the United States" or, in other words, to do the same thing differently, perhaps better and faster, than capitalism has been doing before.¹⁸ At any rate, the mere fact that the people's democracies or the USSR have outwardly democratic constitutions will but little influence the future development regardless of which form the change toward genuine democracy might take.

How Much Democracy?

Does people's democracy still possess any characteristics which are usually associated with the notion of democracy?¹⁹ Is it any different from the established Soviet concept of democracy?

The difficulty of finding a fundamental agreement underlying the different conceptions of democracy, and the wide variety of opinions with regard to the forms in which it may be realized in concrete terms was demonstrated in the course of an inquiry organized by UNESCO in 1949. The purpose of this action was to investigate the conflict of ideals associated with the concept "democracy" by means of questionnaires which were sent to more than five hundred experts from many countries in related fields of philosophy, law, history, political science, sociology, economics, communication analysis and logic. The results of the inquiry were submitted to a Committee of Experts under the chairmanship of Professor E. H. Carr. The essays from the materials, collected in response to the questionnaires, together with other selected documentary material, were published in

18. Aron, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

19. Democracy is used here as meaning a political system. Excluded are the extended meanings, such as economic, cultural and social democracies.

symposium form.²⁰ Two basic points emerged clearly from the inquiry:

- (1) Democracy is a term of approval. There were no replies adverse to democracy, which was claimed as the ideal of all systems of political and social organization. The experts agreed that the participation of the people and the interests of the people were the essential elements in good government and in the social relations which make good government possible.²¹
- (2) The notion of democracy was considered ambiguous, the ambiguities arising from conflicting conceptions of what results can be achieved by participation of the people and what kind of participation is practicable. The vagueness of the term "democracy" was especially apparent with regard to the institutions and devices employed to effect the idea of democracy.²²

It is obvious that the political system of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia or Yugoslavia and those of the United States, Great Britain or Switzerland are not identical even if they employ the same descriptive criteria for the word "democracy." This does not necessarily mean that "democracy" signifies different things to different people. If a Western liberal says that his government is democratic because it is responsible to the people, he really means it. If a communist commends his government as a true democracy, he also means what he says unless he is mistaken or is deliberately trying to deceive. On the basis of this reasoning, John Plamenatz came to the conclusion that both sides would agree to the definition that democracy is a government of persons who are freely chosen by and responsible to the governed.²³ It is questionable how much farther this definition brings us. Plamenatz himself admits that there might be difference of opinion about what constitutes "free choice" and "responsibility." The ambiguity involved in the term "democracy" is thus transferred to the notions of political freedom and responsibility. The proper meaning of the notions of the free choice of government and its responsibility to the governed can only be answered if it is known what institutions are available for putting these notions into practice. It may indeed be true that the difference between the communist and Western conceptions are not based on any disagreement on the principle of popular participation in political decision making. Both sides call for a government by the consent of the governed. But despite the agreement on the ends, there is a strong disagreement on the means. The communist concept is directly adverse to the Western in that it assigns to the communist party the exclusive role of choosing and controlling the means.

If the communist concept of democracy is examined in the light of basic principles such as "majority rule" or "popular sovereignty," it is apparent

20. Richard McKeon, *Democracy in a World of Tensions; a Symposium prepared by UNESCO* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951).

21. *Ibid.*, Appendix II, p. 523.

22. *Ibid.*, Appendix III, p. 527.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 303.

that neither people's democracy nor Soviet democracy have any characteristics usually associated with the notion of democracy. It has been repeatedly asserted in the writings of communist theorists that people's democracy, like every Marxist democracy, is a rule of the majority, the toilers, over the minority, the exploiters. The term "majority," however, is ambiguous. In a country where the voters are allowed to express approval or disapproval of certain issues, both the majority and the minority are fluid. The majority is a variable entity. The majority principle means simply that there is a majority when the vote is taken on a certain issue. No government in the Western sense can claim that it always has a permanent majority of the people behind it. The will of the majority can only be expressed in an electoral or voting procedure. Nor is there such a thing as a definite majority or minority opinion on every matter. In countries where free elections are allowed and competing political parties can exist, it is possible to measure such opinions in terms of votes or public opinion polls. There is always a large percentage of persons who do not have any definite opinion about various matters of general interest. Can it be reasonably claimed that the government has a majority popular support on issues far more complicated? It is hard to believe that in the people's democracies or communist countries in general there are majorities and minorities which are stable and clear-cut. In the countries of the West, the will of the majority can be ascertained in periodical elections. The communist leaders thus far have been unwilling to test their claims to majority support in free elections with genuine political parties and candidates competing for the votes. It is true that the people's democracies formally observe the principle of pluralism of political parties. However, the candidates for the joint single ticket are selected exclusively by the communist parties, and no candidate can be nominated who is unacceptable to the communist party. The multiplicity of political parties in people's democracies is meaningless if the parties' right to propose their own candidates is restricted. But it is not only the question of putting candidates from various non-communist parties on a joint communist/non-communist ticket. Democratic political life, selection of candidates, and elections, presuppose a framework of political liberties. Elections which do not enjoy the existence of such liberties are not legitimate instruments for the authorization of the elected representatives. Any genuine candidate would have to be sponsored by competing independent groups which, in turn, involve freedom of association and free access to various communication and publicity media, the right to criticize and to dissent. As there is no other means of expressing the will of a majority but the free electoral procedure, the claim of the communists that their government represents a genuine majority rule is a fiction which is not subjected to test by accepted procedural methods. On the other hand, negative expressions of the will of the electorate in the people's democracies are by no means lacking. The Hungarian uprising, the mass exodus of the East Germans,

and the wall in Berlin are highly convincing examples of the unqualified repudiation of people's democracy by a considerable number of citizens of at least two people's democratic countries.

Even if the Marxist claim that the proletariat represents the majority of the population is accepted as correct, the essence of democracy is not a mere counting of heads, although the principle of majority naturally is the fundamental element of every workable democratic government. There is no monopoly of truth in a majority only because it is a majority. Nor is there such a monopoly of truth in a minority even if this minority claims to be the sole repository of truth. Democracy is rather a process of adjusting competing interests by discussion and compromise. John Stuart Mill was right in saying that even a silenced opinion may contain a portion of truth, and that "since the general or prevailing opinion on any subject is rarely or never the whole truth, it is only by the collision of adverse opinion that the remainder of the truth has any chance of being supplied."

People's democracy has been acclaimed by the communist as a successful embodiment of the principle of the sovereignty of the people. In all people's democratic constitutions it is claimed that in the states of people's democracy all political power emanates from the people,²⁴ and that this is what "people's democracy" in effect means. The vagueness of the term "popular sovereignty" enables the communists to make effective use of this ideal. The term is used so loosely that it can be easily borrowed by any government which needs or claims popular support. "Popular sovereignty" is interpreted to mean that the people is sovereign because its will is ultimately obeyed. But what is "people's will"? There is no popular will unless it is organized by some sort of voting procedure in which the wills of competing groups are confronted with each other. In people's democracies there is no such procedure. The will of the people is what the communist party or its leaders want. Whatever opposition to the official "will" exists within or without the party, it cannot make its demands effective through a genuine voting procedure.

The term "people" is no less ambiguous. In the communist countries, the "people" is a select group from which elements other than the "toilers" have been excluded. If the term "people" is interpreted so restrictively, there is some justification in the Marxist claim that the dictatorship of the proletariat is not only compatible but identical with democracy. In the words of a Soviet scholar, "the people's character of the people's democratic state is determined solely by the fact that the political power is in the hands

24. For example, Art. 1, Czechoslovak Constitution of 1948; Art. 1 of the Polish Constitution of 1952; Art. 4 of the Rumanian Constitution of 1952; Sec. 2, No. 2, of the Hungarian Constitution of 1949; Art. 2 of the Bulgarian Constitution of 1947; Art. 4 of the Albanian Constitution of 1950; Art. 3 of the Constitution of the German Democratic Republic of 1949; Art. 2 of the Constitution of the People's Democratic Republic of Korea of 1949; Art. 2 of the Mongolian People's Republic of 1952.

of the toilers led by the communist party."²⁵ The meaning of the term "people" varies according to the circumstances, which is exactly what Mao Tse-tung says: "The term 'the people' has different meanings in different countries, and in different historical periods of each country."²⁶ Furthermore, there is also difference between the peoples of various communist countries. Both the Soviet Union and the people's democracies are called "people's regimes." However, while the Soviet society consists exclusively of "toilers," the society in the people's democracies consists of both the "toilers" and the "exploiting classes," because some production means in the latter are still in private hands, at least to a limited extent.²⁷ In China, according to Mao, the "people" consist of four classes:

At the present stage in China, there are the working class, the peasant class, the petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie. Under the leadership of the working class and the Communist Party classes unite together to form their own state and elect their own government so as to carry out a dictatorship over the lackeys of imperialism, and landlord class, the bureaucratic capitalist class and the K.M. reactionaries and their henchmen.²⁸

The four enumerated classes are the "people," and, therefore, the friends of the regime; the rest are "reactionaries," and, therefore the enemies. This distinction is of course not as clear-cut as it may seem. The boundaries between the "people" and the "reactionaries" are fluid; a worker or peasant may turn into a "reactionary," while a conformist member of the capitalist class may become a member of the "people." The final decision about the class association is up to the communist party.

Is people's democracy more "democratic" in the Western sense than the Soviet Union? There is indeed in the political system of people's democracy one important feature which, at least on the surface, makes people's democracy look like a less pronounced form of proletarian state than the Soviet Union, that is, the already mentioned existence of the plurality of political parties. It should be pointed out, however, that the communist theorists regard the existence of various political parties side by side with the communist party as a sign of political and socio-economic immaturity, and not as a concession to the liberal ideal of democracy. The plurality of political parties in people's democracies naturally has a considerable propagandistic value, and is apparently supposed to make the people's democratic form of government attractive to various new nations who may regard the participation of the communists in a coalition government desirable from the point of view of national unity. It is significant that the Czechoslovak

25. Farberov, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-32.

26. Mao Tse-tung, *On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People* (Peking: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1957), p. 8.

27. Farberov, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

28. Mao Tse-tung, "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship," in Conrad Brandt, Benjamin Schwartz and John K. Fairbank, *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1952), p. 456.

Constitution of 1960, which declared Czechoslovakia the first socialist country in the world after the Soviet Union, has preserved the institution of the National Front uniting all social organizations,²⁹ and including political parties other than the Communist Party.³⁰ The preservation of the principle of plurality of political parties in a country which has already achieved socialism and professes to build communism is an inconsistency which goes counter to the basic Marxist doctrine of the state. The communists consider the plurality of political parties as peculiar to bourgeois democracy, where the existence of political parties reflects social antagonisms inherent in capitalist society. In a socialist society, from which all social conflicts are said to have disappeared, a plurality of political parties has no place. There is room only for one party, the workers' party, which is a select instrument through which the transformation of society should be effected. A multiple party system in a state which has allegedly reached the stage of full socialism is a doctrinal absurdity which can be explained only by the recognition on the part of the communists that a preservation of an outwardly liberal political system may appear more attractive to various non-communist political forces which desire a cooperation with the communists but fear their dictatorship. The acceptance of the principle of plurality of political parties by a country which professes to be wholly socialist also indicates the complete irrelevancy of political parties, other than the communist, in a communist state.

If democracy means, in essence, the right of the people to choose and dismiss a government, people's democracy is nothing but a pseudo-democracy in which certain rituals usually associated with the democratic idea are still preserved on the surface but are given an entirely different content which in fact negates the very nature of democracy.

In the discussion of the "democratic" character of people's democracy, one more point should be brought out. In a UNESCO inquiry on ideological conflicts concerning democracy, a reply was received from a people's democratic representative who offered his own definition of people's democracy. Ladislav Rieger, Professor of Philosophy of the Charles University in Prague, Czechoslovakia, defined people's democracy as a new form of democracy "characterized by the direct participation of the whole working people in the government of the state and by the permanent control of its administration." This new form of democracy was said to be "opposed to the bourgeois system of indirect democracy controlled through representation."³¹ Rieger's definition is in fact an assertion that people's democracy

29. Czechoslovakia. Constitution, *Ústava Československé socialistické republiky* (Praha: Obrana lidu, 1961), Art. 6.

30. Kommunistická strana Československa, Ústřední výbor, "Zásady nové ústavy Československé republiky a příprava voleb, Referát A. Novotného na zasedání Ústředního výboru KSČ dne 7-8 dubna 1960." *Rudé právo* (April 17, 1960).

31. McKeon, *op. cit.*, p. 356.

is a direct democracy. But people's democracy is no more a direct democracy than the Soviet political system. If the communist political institutions are taken at their face value—regardless of the actual power relationships—the workers' state is far from being a direct democracy of the working class. No modern state can be organized and governed in the form of town meetings of its citizens. Proletarian democracy, represented by the dictatorship of the proletariat, has been called, with some justification, "a metaphysical notion."³² In its governmental organization, the Marxist state, whether the Soviet state or its people's democratic variety, will always formally be a representative state, because in large states democracy must be representative, with political parties and deputies; a direct and complete identification of the governed and those who govern is impossible.

Whereas in Russia the experiment with a direct democracy was really tried, and the councils of workers' and peasants' deputies functioning simultaneously as legislative and executive agencies became the official power holders in the pre-1936 period, the people's democracies never even attempted to introduce any genuine functionalism of freely operating plural forces. The various "national" or "people's" committees which emerged in those countries at the end of World War II were nothing but instruments of the communist party for seizing and maintaining full control of political and socio-economic life in the immediate post-war period. Though formally composed of the representatives of all parties (except of those accused of collaborating with the fascists), these committees were fully dominated by the well-instructed communists who, in a majority of cases, reduced the other members to the role of timid or opportunistic yes-men. While the actual contribution of the national or people's committees to the destruction of the last vestiges of legal order in the Soviet satellites was doubtless considerable, their role within the government system was purely formal. It is significant that the Czechoslovak Constitution of 1948 contained provisions according to which the national committees were also subordinated to the ministries and lower executive organs. This flagrant ideological flaw in the structure of the Czechoslovak workers' state was removed only later.³³

In the search for the real meaning of people's democracy there is little use for either of the following official Soviet definitions:

People's democracy is a new form of the political organization of society which was established in a number of countries of Europe and Asia as a result of both the destruction of Germany and Japan by an anti-fascist coalition standing under the leadership of the Soviet Union, and the victory of the national liberation movements.³⁴

32. Fabre, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

33. Sec. 131 of the Czechoslovak Constitution of 1948, amended by the Act No. 81 of 1953.

34. Mark Moiseevich Rosental, *Kratkii filosofskii slovar*. Pod redaktsiei M. Rosentala i P. Iudina (Moskva: Gos. izd. pol. lit-ry, 1955), p. 306.

Or,

People's democracy is a form of political organization of society the essence of which, in accordance with concrete historical conditions, is either a dictatorship of the proletariat or a joint dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry.³⁵

The first definition refers to the already existing people's democracies. People's democracy, however, is a form of government, and is thus a generic concept. According to Soviet theory, people's democracy is neither limited to the countries where it had been already established nor to Europe and Asia. It can be established at any time, in any country, the United States not excepted (Foster).

The statement that people's democracy is identical with the dictatorship of the proletariat or the revolutionary-democratic joint dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry does not give any clue as to how it differs from the Soviet state which, as is known, is also a dictatorship of the proletariat. At the present time, there seem to be no communist states which represent a joint dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry to serve as an example of such, because they all, including the Chinese people's democratic dictatorship, have reached the stage of full proletarian dictatorship.

It appears necessary to turn to non-communist sources for a more appropriate definition.

Professor Vedel defined people's democracy as a "regime of a country which has not yet advanced toward socialism as far as the USSR, and cannot therefore be called 'soviet' in the proper meaning of the word."³⁶

Burdeau pointed out that, constitutionally, the people's democracies represent a compromise between the soviet system and the parliamentary institutions of the West. According to him, people's democracy, judged by its historical evolution, is

a regime of transition to a popular monarchy of a Marxist style which aims at the realization of a communist revolution through orderly and legal means.³⁷

People's democracy could be tentatively defined as a communist-dominated regime which in its essential features resembles that of the Soviet Union, but has not yet reached the degree of the latter's political and socio-economic organization at which it aims. Like the Soviet Union, the people's democracies are authoritarian and totalitarian states in which a centralized and disciplined communist party, usually through a nominal coalition,

35. *Bolshaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia* (2. izd.; Moskva, 1954), xxix, p. 131.

36. Georges Vedel, *Les démocraties marxistes* (Paris: Cours de droit, 1953), I, p. 5.

37. Georges Burdeau, *Droit constitutionnel et institutions politiques* (8e éd.; Paris: Librairie générale de droit et de jurisprudence, 1959), p. 176. Professor Cole defines people's democracy in a similar way: "The primary function of these governments [i.e., people's democratic governments] is to provide political institutions suitable for transforming the countries of Eastern Europe from a system of relatively free enterprise to one of Soviet socialism." Taylor Cole, *European Political Systems* (2d rev. ed.; New York: A. A. Knopf, 1959), p. 789.

holds a monopoly of political, economic and spiritual power to the exclusion of other independent groupings. Institutionally, the people's democracies are a kind of neophyte, pre-socialist, regime, representing a preparatory stage for a soviet-like regime which will be established as soon as the necessary level of socio-economic development is achieved. The term "soviet-like" does not mean that the states of people's democracy are supposed to be incorporated into the Soviet Union in the future. The more than 20-years long experience has shown that a complete political incorporation is not necessary for the attainment of the objectives of the Soviet Union.

In view of this essential identity between the two patterns of government linked together by the same ideology, what then are the chief distinguishing features? As outlined in Chapter III of the present study, the differences stressed by Soviet sources are mostly vague and refer exclusively to certain constitutional forms which for the most part can be explained by the different degrees of historical development. It has been said that there is no difference between the people's democracies and the Soviet Union except for the fact that the former were mere instruments of the latter in the drive for the subjugation of various countries of the world.³⁸

As already pointed out, the only different pattern of a proletarian state appears, at least in theory, to be that elaborated by the Yugoslav communists. However, the Yugoslav concept of the proletarian revolution and state was never accepted by Moscow as orthodox, and cannot serve as a representative example.

Objectively, the following distinctions between the Soviet and people's democratic pattern emerge:

(1) In the Soviet system, the principle of the *gouvernement conventionnel*, or assembly government, was applied in its entirety, whereas at least some people's democracies recognized other constitutional techniques, such as a partial separation of legislative and executive powers. Nevertheless, both patterns of government are closer to one another in view of the dominant role of the communist party which, for all practical purposes, remains the exclusive power holder regardless of the mode of actual constitutional form and techniques.

(2) The Soviet Constitution gives an official sanction to the Communist Party and defines its role in the governmental system. In the states of peoples democracy, the integration of the communist party into the state system is not always complete. This formal difference in no way affects the power position of the respective communist parties. In this respect, too, the differences in the formal positions of the communist party in the Soviet Union and the people's democracies are less significant than they might appear to be.

(3) In contrast to the political monism of the Soviet Union, the people's

38. Vedel, *op. cit.*, III, p. 391.

democracies still maintain pluralism of political parties. This particular feature has been discussed in greater detail in Chapter III of the present study, where also the historical background of this institution has been considered. It was also pointed out that this qualified pluralism tolerates only certain political parties which have subscribed to a program elaborated by the communists. The reasons for the preservation of the multiplicity of political parties were purely tactical: by this method the communists forced all legitimate political forces in the people's democracies to accept political responsibility for certain far-reaching political and economic decisions. Political parties and their leaders who participated in such decisions were compromised by their collaboration with the communists and thus became even more dependent on them. At the same time, the inclusion of other political parties in various people's fronts facilitated the communist penetration of such strata of the population which otherwise were difficult to reach. The existence of other political parties side by side with the communists has not led to the former's consolidation as an independent political force. The principle of pluralism of political parties in the people's democracies can be viewed not much more than communist window-dressing for foreign consumption.

(4) The Soviet Union extends the principle of socialist property to all means of production, and admits private property of citizens only in a very limited measure. In the countries of the people's democracy, the principle of private property is still largely tolerated, and remains in existence as an institution. Nevertheless, the tendency is toward restrictions of private property through a variety of measures. The people's democracies, as states dominated by a totalitarian ideology, are instruments of this ideology and the goals at which they aim are more important than the actual present state of affairs.

(5) The most important and, in fact, the only real difference between the Soviet Union and the countries of the people's democracy is in their international status. In matters of foreign policy, the subservience of the satellites to the Moscow line has been one of the essential conditions for acquiring a status of people's democracy. This was true for the initial period immediately after the end of World War II, and even more so later on after the official enunciation of a uniform people's democratic theory in 1948. Nor did the post-Stalin relaxation of Soviet pressure bring about any decisive sign of independence for the Russian satellites of Eastern Europe in matters of foreign relations. The present trend toward an increasing diversification of methods of building socialism does not appear to indicate any far-reaching relaxation of the Soviet control over the foreign policy of the people's democracies of Eastern Europe. Obviously, Yugoslavia and Communist China belong in a different category. The Soviet attempt to coerce Yugoslavia into obedience has failed. The intensity of the present conflict between the Soviet Union and China makes it unlikely that any kind of

command-and-obedience relationship could be established between the two giants. Though the conflict still rests on ideological and political grounds, it has strong undertones which indicate strains and stresses arising from national and geographical backgrounds as well as from competing ambitions with regard to the leadership of international communism.

The relations between the Soviet Union and the European people's democracies were described by some students of Eastern Europe as quasi-federalism,³⁹ although it probably would be more accurate to describe this relationship as vertical.⁴⁰ The Soviet Union, which has consistently opposed a formation of regional groups within its orbit, is connected with the people's democracies through a network of treaties and agreements both bilateral and multilateral. While the recent developments within the communist bloc seem to indicate that at least some people's democracies are becoming increasingly more assertive in matters of ideology and economic policy, the Soviet Union, for the time being, is strong enough to prevent a defection from the bloc. It did prevent a defection of Hungary, and there are reasons to believe that it would use force again if necessary to prevent other secessions. As Leonard Schapiro pointed out, "the solidarity of the bloc is little more than a reflection of the extent to which the Soviet Union can enforce its military influence over its allies."⁴¹

The past subordination of the people's democracies to the Soviet Union in matters of foreign policy led some authors to deny entirely the status of a sovereign country to all Soviet satellites. It has been argued that, since the national communist parties were restricted in their freedom by political and ideological allegiance to the Soviet Union and its Communist Party, the people's democracies could not be regarded as sovereign states under international law, and should be regarded as mere colonies or mandates of the Soviet Union.⁴²

While this point of view does not have to be accepted in its literal meaning, it is obvious that a restriction of the sovereign equality of other communist states vis-à-vis the Soviet Union was necessary for the perpetuation of the Soviet position as the center of ideological authority. Until recently, the Soviet Union, or the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, determined the policy for the international communist movement. In other words, the unity and cohesion of this movement was preserved by the dominant position of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The emergence of several centers of ideological authority made the continuation of the

39. Zygmunt Jedryka, "La récente réforme constitutionnelle en Pologne," *Revue internationale de droit comparé*, IV, No. 4 (Oct.-Dec., 1952) p. 709.

40. Rossi, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

41. Leonard Schapiro in his answer to the "Questionnaire—Ten Years After." *Survey*, No. 47 (Apr. 1963), p. 44.

42. Oswald von Nell-Breuning and Hermann Sacher, *Zur christlichen Staatslehre* (2., überarb. und erweiterte Aufl. Freiburg: Herder, 1957), p. 129.

established practice hardly feasible. A mere adherence to Marxist-Leninist ideology proved to be insufficient as a uniting factor in the absence of a single center of interpretation. Thus far, the international communist movement has failed to develop a supra-national body endowed with an authority to interpret Marxism-Leninism by means of negotiated decisions. Until such solution can be found, the Soviet Union will have to keep a close watch over its allies.

CHAPTER V

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY, NATIONAL DEMOCRACY, OR POPULAR FRONT?

The vast body of the doctrine of people's democracy has been elaborated for the primary purpose of explaining ideologically the communist regimes established in certain countries of Europe and Asia after World War II. It has been suggested that the theory of people's democracy provided a guide for local communist leaders in their program of revolutionary action.¹ It should be pointed out, however, that the people's democratic regimes were in existence as early as 1944-45, while an attempt to fit the Soviet satellites into a conceptual framework of Marxism-Leninism was not made until 1947. As noted, the meaning of the term "people's democracy" was never clearly defined during the initial post-war stage. In practice, people's democracy meant different things in different countries. In Yugoslavia, people's democracy in 1945 was a dictatorship under a single party, a system of government in which the economic and political power of the property-owning classes had been eliminated, and in which the basis of political power was to be the alliance of workers and peasants. This union of the latter two groups was believed to be the essential feature by which the form of government in the people's democracies differed from the Soviet Union. The peasantry was to remain as a class, and its interests were supposed to be automatically protected in a government of workers and peasants. The expropriation of industry and large estates was complete. In other East European countries, the people's democratic governments were coalitions in which political parties retained their separate existence even though they were restricted in their political freedom by some form of allegiance to a common program sponsored by the communists. In some countries of Eastern Europe there was even a distinct parliamentary opposition outside the coalition. There was some justification in Révai's statement that—at that time—people's democracy was a "plebeian, militant, consistent and popular kind of bourgeois democracy."² At least in form, this kind of coalition government resembled Western parliamentary democracy, with, however, one important difference: it was only a truncated coalition from which certain political parties—usually right and center—

1. Gordon Skilling, "People's Democracy in Soviet Theory," *Soviet Studies*, III (1951-52), p. 16.

2. József Révai, "Our People's Democracy" (1949). In Robert A. Goldwin, *Readings in Russian Foreign Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 581.

were excluded under the standard pretext that they had collaborated with the fascists. Unlike in Yugoslavia, the economic changes in these countries were carried out only in part; land reform was moderate and nationalization of industry was limited to large and key industries. Yet these governments also were called people's democracies, and not by communists only.³ While the *form* of these governments was reminiscent of those in the West, there was a great difference in content. Despite all outward appearances, the communists were the real power holders who monopolized not only the policy-decision functions, but also the policy-execution functions. Furthermore, because of its dominant position within the coalition, the communist party stood beyond effective political control as there was no way of invoking its political responsibility separate from that of the rest of the coalition. In their initial stage, the people's democracies had one thing in common: they were dedicated satellites of the Soviet Union. This applies also to Yugoslavia regardless of the independent victories of the Yugoslav communists. At that time, Yugoslavia was regarded by the Soviet Union as a model disciple of proletarian democracy.

The political system of people's democracy was thus fully in existence in Eastern Europe before Soviet scholars even attempted to formulate a theory of sufficient doctrinal originality to fit the pattern of government of the satellites. The official Soviet theory of people's democracy may have been designed as a guide to action for the communist parties operating in other countries which, at that particular time, looked like prospective recipients of people's democracy. For the East European people's democracies, the Soviet theory was nothing more than a "socio-historic analysis of an already existing situation," a "product rather than the inspiration of events and political policies."⁴

People's democracy owes its origin to a combination of historical events rather than to strictly doctrinal considerations. Nevertheless it would be erroneous to neglect the ideological aspect of this problem. The Soviet Union, which played a central role in the emergence of people's democracy, is not only a great power following its national interest, but also an authoritarian and totalitarian state tied to an international ideology. The imposition of communist rule over the various countries of Eastern Europe cannot be explained merely by Russia's quest for the political and military security of its western frontier. Closely connected with the Soviet national interest was the intention to transform the world along the path of Marxist-Leninist socialism as a step toward the eventual classless society.⁵ Both

3. It is significant that the official daily paper of the Czechoslovak Catholic Party carried the name "*People's Democracy*" ("*Lidová demokracie*").

4. Benjamin Schwartz, "China and the Soviet Theory of People's Democracy," *Problems of Communism*, III, No. 5 (September-October, 1954), p. 9.

5. Cf. Eugen Lemberg, *Osteuropa und die Sowjetunion*; *Geschichte und Probleme* (Salzburg: O. Müller, 1956), p. 276.

these aspects must therefore be considered in the discussion of the origins of people's democracy in Eastern Europe.

The historic factors which were instrumental in the rise of people's democracy can be tentatively stated as follows:

(1) As a result of the war-time agreements between the Soviet Union and the Western allies, Eastern Europe became a sphere of influence of the former. The Western allies, while accepting a preponderance of the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe, desired nevertheless to retain a foothold in this area by insisting on a genuine collaboration of all democratic forces which, as they believed, would prevent the establishment of a communist monopoly and dictatorship. They only vaguely realized that there was a direct connection between the communist dictatorship in Eastern Europe and the Soviet quest for power. Nevertheless, they hoped that the new government could be both *genuinely democratic* and *pro-Soviet*, a requirement which, in retrospect, proved to be too ambitious. This is what is called sometimes a "historic misunderstanding." While Roosevelt and Churchill understood the "sphere of influence" in the traditional sense, a preponderance expressed in terms of a percentage of influence, to the Soviet Union it meant governments run by communist parties owing a total ideological subservience to Moscow, a sphere of exclusive communist rule,⁶ in which the East European countries were no more sovereign than the "sovereign" republics of the Soviet Union.⁷

(2) The presence of the Soviet armies in various countries of Eastern Europe, and the influence of Marxian ideology which was greatly enhanced by the fact that a victorious great power was identified with it, gave to the local communist parties a power position out of proportion to their numerical strength.

(3) The social structure of the East European countries and the political mood of the liberated nations was not favorable to an immediate all-out communist revolution.

(4) The military strength of the Western allies and uncertainty about their possible reaction made it rather risky for the Soviet Union to push the communist revolution too far.

All these factors favored certain limited changes in the political, economic and social structure of the East European countries with some sort of midway regimes acceptable to both sides—to the Soviet Union as well as to the Western allies. In 1944 and 1945, it was generally believed on the Western side of the demarcation line that the difference between the eastern and western types of democracy would disappear and that the gap between them was merely an historical accident. Many people in the West were

6. Richard Lowenthal, "The Logic of One-Party Rule," *Problems of Communism*, vii, No. 2 (March-April, 1958), p. 26.

7. Samuel L. Sharp, "National Interest: Key to Soviet Politics," *Problems of Communism*, vii, No. 2 (March-April, 1958), p. 20.

convinced that the Western democracies would move in the direction of socialism, while the soviet and popular democracies would gradually adopt a more liberal system of government.⁸ Neither of these expectations was realized. The Marxist regimes failed to develop into liberal democracies. Nor did the Western democracies adopt socialist systems similar to that of the Soviet Union. In the course of a few years, the East European people's democracies crystallized into totalitarian dictatorships in which political, economic and spiritual power was monopolized by communist parties who, with the exception of Tito's Yugoslavia and Mao's China, owed their ideological obedience to Moscow.

The most striking elements of the genesis of people's democracy are the various changes in the theoretical interpretations of its meaning. The Soviet theory of people's democracy has moved through various stages during which the earlier notions were amended or discarded and replaced by new ones. The question which inevitably poses itself after a close examination of the metamorphoses of the concept of people's democracy is: Why were such changes necessary?

It can be assumed that the changes in theory were not mere intellectual exercises. Considering the established fact that the communist ideology necessarily influences the thinking and policy-making decisions of the Soviet leaders, and that these leaders, in turn, regard ideology as a practical instrument of power, it appears certain that the changes of the theory of people's democracy were dictated by both a desire to preserve ideological consistency and by a practical necessity. The storehouse of Marxism-Leninism is so vast that it can provide a theoretical justification for many ideological alterations. It can also supply the appropriate textual quotations which may be needed in order to preserve the appearance of ideological continuity and consistency. The theory of people's democracy has undergone change through time because it served different purposes in the immediate post-war years, after the outbreak of the Soviet-Yugoslav dispute, and during the post-Stalin period when the direction of communist expansion turned predominantly to underdeveloped countries.

Despite some beliefs to the contrary, it appears that the success of the term "people's democracy" has been largely accidental. In the initial stage, "people's democracy" was an improvised name for the political system emerging in Eastern Europe in the wake of advancing Soviet armies. At that time, the authors of the term hardly hoped that the attempt at creating a Soviet sphere in Eastern Europe would be so easy. Nor did they expect that

8. See for example: Hubert Ripka, *East and West* (London: Lincoln-Prager Publishers, 1944), especially the following sentence: "Bolshevism, by means of an avowedly temporary dictatorship of the proletariat, seeks to build a new society in accord with its doctrine and can evolve into a democracy, in which political liberties, in the spirit of liberal democracy, would gradually be permitted and practiced." (p. 19).

the improvised formula of people's democracy would ever become an inherent part of the Soviet theory of the state. The Soviet leaders must have been surprised to see the non-communist politicians of liberated East Europe adopting the name "people's democracy" in their political vocabularies. The general attitude of the communist leaders was that of caution. For a while, the Soviet Union tolerated a limited degree of ideological and institutional diversity in East Europe, and the loose meaning of people's democracy fitted well the atmosphere of correct relations between the Soviet Union and the Western allies, as it conveniently advertised the apparent Soviet non-interference in the internal affairs of the East European countries. At the same time, the absence of extreme ideological demands on the part of local communist leaders helped reassure the local population that an all-out communist rule over Eastern Europe was not imminent. The official attitude toward the notion of people's democracy was unknown, since, during the first two post-war years, a complete silence surrounded the theoretical meaning of the new form of government. The first interpretations appeared during the first half of 1947, in the form of a few essays by Soviet scholars who, for the most part, treated the people's democratic state as a transitional form between the bourgeois, parliamentary democracy and the Soviet system. It was understood that this transitional political system would bring a limited degree of socialization; however, no rigid ideological demands were set forth. At the same time, the authors of these essays made it unmistakably clear that the political predominance of communist parties obtained through Soviet occupation was regarded as permanent. While the situation differed from country to country, the people's democracies were not required to subordinate their interests entirely to Moscow, although they were expected to make the Soviet Union the center of their foreign policy. The local communists appeared to be genuinely interested in matters of economic recovery rather than in extreme ideological programs and, to a varying degree, the East European countries outwardly maintained an appearance of parliamentary democracy. They were governed by more or less genuine coalitions in which the communists had a dominant position, yet did not claim exclusive rule. Nevertheless, the communists were fully in command of the security apparatus, controlled the major part of the mass communication system, and were firmly entrenched in the important commanding positions of the armed forces. The Soviet Union, while keeping a close watch on its East European satellites, did not press for an internal sovietization of the area, mainly because the Soviet leaders were not quite certain about the West's possible reaction. At that time, the allied armies still represented a deterrent to any excessively aggressive Soviet move. The time was not ripe for a strictly doctrinaire interpretation of the East European political systems in terms of the dictatorship of the proletariat or the joint dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. Both these terms were regarded by Moscow as a political liability capable of alarming

Russia's Western allies and alienating the non-communist partners of the East European coalition governments.

The lenient attitude of the Soviet leaders towards the theoretical interpretation of people's democracy, and their toleration of at least some institutional and ideological diversity in Eastern Europe ended abruptly in 1948. The international situation deteriorated considerably; the latent conflict between East and West became more acute, and the communist control over the East European countries became tighter. The division of the world into two hostile camps was clearly demonstrated on such events as the civil war in Greece; American aid to Greece and Turkey; the formation of the Cominform in September, 1947; and the February *coup* in Czechoslovakia in 1948 when the Czechoslovak communists threw away all democratic pretenses and turned the country into a full-fledged communist state. And above all, a serious split occurred between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. In the case of Yugoslavia, slogans of a national path to socialism had a particularly ominous sound for the Soviet Union. Moscow had to stop, once and for all, the disintegrating trend within its orbit, and to make it clear that there was only one way to socialism: the Soviet route, which the East European people's democracies were expected to adopt without delay and without exceptions. Dimitrov's statement of the new doctrine of December 19, 1948, represented a systematic revision of the earlier concepts of people's democracy. The political form of people's democracy was identified with the dictatorship of the proletariat. Although it was still admitted that the people's democratic dictatorship of the proletariat differed somewhat from the Soviet dictatorship, the difference was seen merely in the degree of historical development. Under the principle of new orthodoxy, all previous signs of institutional diversity were greatly subdued, or rejected entirely. The new constitutions adopted by the Soviet satellites followed the Soviet model of 1936. A total subservience to Moscow, not only in foreign policy but also in domestic matters, was the basic condition for acquiring the status of people's democracy. The leaders of the national communist parties were expected to make repeated declarations of devotion to the Soviet Union expressing their determination to apply the Soviet example everywhere, in political, economic, and cultural spheres. Those communist leaders who were dependent for their positions on Soviet support complied without hesitation. Theoretical and practical uniformity solved for them many problems in foreign relations and in domestic affairs as well. The only dissidents were the Yugoslav communists, but Yugoslavia was no longer regarded by the Soviet Union as a people's democracy. The Soviet sponsored theory of people's democracy cemented the institutional uniformity of the East European countries and brought them closer to the Soviet Union. Their dependence on and indebtedness to the Soviet Union was so complete that the maternal country did not have to resort to such devices as incorporation of the satellites into the Soviet Union or creation of

a formal federation between the Soviet Union and the people's democracies.

With theoretical uniformity firmly established throughout Eastern Europe (Yugoslavia excepted), it seemed that no major changes in the theory need come for some time. Nevertheless, a new revision of the theory took place in the fall of 1951, that is, during the period of a strict Stalinist orthodoxy. The major innovation was the extension of the concept of people's democracy to include "less mature" political forms which precede the dictatorship of the proletariat, *i.e.*, various coalition regimes in which both proletarian and non-proletarian elements are represented. A strict adherence to immutable tenets of Marxism-Leninism required that the non-communist representation be restricted exclusively to the peasantry. However, by calling "joint dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry" such governments as that of post-war Czechoslovakia, the concept of the peasantry must have been interpreted much more broadly than the name indicated. This form of government obviously included the national bourgeoisie as well. The probable reason for extending the basis of people's democracy to include pre-proletarian forms of government was the intention to find room in the theory for Communist China, whose political system could be called neither an exclusive dictatorship of the proletariat nor a joint dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. The extension of the concept of people's democracy might also have heralded a forthcoming new approach of the USSR to the underdeveloped countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. With the new communist strategy emerging after Stalin's death, this new concept of people's democracy could easily be applied to other situations, especially to the colonial and quasi-colonial countries of the world where the native bourgeoisie was a far more important political force than were the workers and peasants. In Mao's theory of new democracy, the national bourgeoisie is one of the constituting elements of the proletarian dictatorship. The successful experiment of the Chinese communists, who were able to enlist the national bourgeoisie as an ally in the fight against the Kuomintang, probably was instrumental in the reappraisal of the role of the bourgeois elements in communist strategy.

Sobolev, who formulated the new theory of people's democracy, fully recognized the importance of the participation of the non-communist elements in the first (bourgeois-democratic) stage of the people's democratic revolution:

At its present stage the national-liberation struggle has attained a highly mass character. The participants in these movements include the most diverse social forces: the working class, which is their organizer and inspirer, the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie, the intelligentsia, and the national bourgeoisie. In countries where the people are fighting for national freedom coalitions have been formed of all democratic, anti-feudal, and anti-imperialist forces.⁹

Yet his outlook remained influenced by a distrust of the bourgeoisie. His only examples having been Communist China, Viet-Nam, North Korea, and Outer Mongolia, Sobolev regarded the hegemony of the proletariat in the various bourgeois-democratic coalition governments as indispensable. Nevertheless, he admitted that people's democracy could also be established in a bourgeois-democratic form in contrast to the earlier Soviet views that people's democracy must be a dictatorship of the proletariat, and a people's democratic revolution must be a socialist revolution. The resolutions of the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union provided an ideological framework for extending the concept of people's democracy even further, by including parliamentary republics among the possible forms of the people's democratic state. The concept of the possibility of employing parliamentary forms for the transition to socialism was better suited for the communist parties operating in the underdeveloped countries where cooperation with non-communist forces was necessary for the communist advance to power. A more flexible notion of people's democracy also implied the possibility of achieving socialism without the necessity of smashing the existing coalition governments.

The concept of a temporary alliance between the communists and other political parties has been a part of communist tactics ever since Lenin, and the popular or national fronts have been favorite instruments in the communist quest for power. The advantages of cooperation with the non-communist elements are numerous:

- (1) The combination of forces against a common enemy makes success more easily attainable.
- (2) The cooperation of the communists with certain sectors of the bourgeoisie prevents a formation of a united non- or anti-communist front.
- (3) The coalition between the communists and other political parties, especially those of the center, shows the communists as a cooperative and positive element of the coalition governments.
- (4) The non-communist parties collaborating with the communists are made co-responsible for the decisions of the coalition governments.
- (5) A coalition between communists and non-communists facilitates an unhampered communist penetration of the non-communist coalition partners.

According to this strategy, the positive gains derived from the cooperation between the communists and non-communists should not be frustrated by too rigid doctrinal considerations. From this point of view, another Soviet scholar has chosen a more flexible approach to the theory of revolution. N. V. Tropkin has pointed out that Lenin's theory of socialist revolution was fully applicable to colonial and dependent countries for which it "opened broad perspectives in the struggle for democracy and socialism." In his interpretation of the so-called "new Leninist theory," the "possibility of a victory of a socialist revolution is determined not solely

by the degree of the economic development of a given country and the relative strength of its proletariat, but also by the revolutionary spirit of the proletariat, the existence of the Marxist-Leninist party which is capable of organizing such a victory, by the degree of influence which the toiling masses are able to exercise over the peasantry as well as by other factors."¹⁰ Tropkin accepts Lenin's doctrine of revolution by successive stages, but instead of a "bourgeois-democratic" revolution, he speaks only of a "democratic" revolution which results in the establishment of a "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the people." He is not burdened with the doctrinaire necessity of interpreting the revolution of the first stage strictly in anti-feudal terms. His revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the people is broader, and is not limited only to workers and peasants, although these two strata still form the basis of his political system. His multi-class dictatorship includes all reformist forces.

Tropkin has merely indicated the vast possibilities which Leninism and, especially, Lenin's theory of imperialism, offer in terms of an ideological interpretation of the developments in various backward countries of the world. An attempt at a systematic presentation of the implications of Lenin's ideas about imperialism has been made by Alfred G. Meyer, who has abstracted from the Leninist thought a doctrine which he calls "dialectics of backwardness."¹¹ Cautioning that his doctrine was never explicitly stated by Lenin but is merely implied in his thought about imperialism, Professor Meyer points out that Lenin regarded the backward nations as carriers of the proletarian class consciousness. The oppressed nations, like Marx's oppressed and exploited classes, fight against their oppressors and exploiters, the imperialist powers. The class struggle is projected on an international scale, and thus becomes a struggle between nations. By linking together nationalism and socialism, the doctrine of the dialectics of backwardness serves as a Marxist explanation of modern nationalism. In this interpretation, national movements in backward countries become the carriers of a revolution which is still called "proletarian" but assumes an entirely different character. This "proletarian" revolution aims no longer at the destruction or seizure of the capitalist industry but rather at an economic construction necessary for the national emancipation. In this setting, the Soviet Union plays the role of a protector of the oppressed, backward nations.¹² According to Meyer's analysis of Lenin's theory of imperialism,

10. N. V. Tropkin, *Ob osnovakh strategii i taktiki leninizma* (Moskva: Izd-vo Znanie, 1955), pp. 14-15.

11. Alfred G. Meyer, *Leninism* (New York: Praeger, 1962), p. 259.

12. See for example Brezhnev, speech on November 3, 1967 at the fiftieth anniversary celebration of the Bolshevik Revolution, in which he said: "An important source of our strength on the international arena is the union with the national liberation movement and with the anti-imperialist forces throughout the world. By marching in step and supporting each other, it is easier for us to find solutions to many international problems, including the problems of consolidating peace."

there are two distinct, yet interrelated, struggles in the backward countries, a proletarian struggle against the bourgeoisie and the struggle of the bourgeoisie against feudal and pre-capitalist institutions, a phenomenon which Meyer calls "combined development." The merger of the two revolutionary movements opens new vistas for a joint struggle waged by various social forces. The revolution grows in scope, merging all revolutionary movements into a single revolutionary process aimed at the destruction of capitalism.

It should be pointed out, however, that the communist theoreticians seem somewhat reluctant to make a full use of the interpretation of the theory of imperialism along the lines indicated by Professor Meyer. Apparently for political reasons implied in the Soviet concept of peaceful co-existence, it has not been thought appropriate to apply a strictly Marxist-Leninist interpretation to the underdeveloped countries. Instead, the Soviet Union seems to rely, in an increasing measure, on the non-communist nationalist forces rather than on the local communist parties, leaving aside, at least for the time being, any doctrinal issues and therefore placing more emphasis on matters related to national independence rather than to social revolution. As noted, Moscow's gradual transition from the attitude of opposition to nationalist regimes in underdeveloped countries to a policy of their support has been indicated by the trend toward including an increasing number of non-proletarian elements in the notion of people's democracy. Although the Soviet interest in the colonial countries goes back to Lenin, the decisive shift in the communist expansion, from the advanced countries to the underdeveloped areas, occurred about the time of the Nineteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1952 and, even more pronouncedly, after Stalin's death. The present Soviet policy of *status quo* in Europe appears to be connected with the trend indicated by Stalin in his political testament, *The Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*,¹³ in which Stalin stressed the precedence of conflicts within the imperialist camp over those between the socialist and imperialist orbits, thus affirming the theory of the inevitability of war within the capitalist camp, and indicating a possibility of coexistence between socialism and capitalism. There are considerable advantages for the Soviet Union in this course of action: continuing conflicts within the capitalist camp not only weaken capitalist society from within, but grant the Soviet Union the respite necessary for the development of its economy. In Professor Marcuse's penetrating analysis, this reasoning forced the Soviet Union to reconsider basic strategy and to aim at a general relaxation of tensions between East

Leonid I. Brezhnev, Excerpts from the Speech on November 3, 1967, *New York Times*, Nov. 4, 1967, p. 8C.

13. Iosif Stalin, *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952).

and West which not only would give the Soviet Union a possibility to concentrate its efforts on domestic developments but would also remove the essential element of Western cohesiveness, the necessity to keep a common defense front against the Soviet aggression. In the Soviet reasoning, the West needs a permanent war economy which sustains the high level of West's productivity, and this delays the forthcoming revolution. An intransigent Soviet policy towards the West would only contribute to the continuation of the war economy boom on the capitalist side. For this reason, the Soviet Union must relax its hard policy, and put more emphasis on effective economic competition instead of political and military measures.¹⁴ In practice, this means the adoption of a softer line on the part of West European communist parties, and an encouragement of the popular front policy. The resolutions of the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union of 1956, with their basic concept of a peaceful competition of the socialist countries with the West, were fully in line with the trend indicated by Stalin's political testament and represent a more articulate expression of this tendency.

In the realm of theory, this policy required a doctrinal reappraisal of the role of the non-communist political groups in the communist strategy. The re-evaluation of the role of the non-proletarian elements was not undertaken for the sake of the Soviet satellites in Eastern Europe. Neither the bourgeoisie nor the peasantry of the East European countries carried any political weight by then. No doctrinal adjustments were needed in that part of the world, which was regarded as safe for the Soviet Union. It was the bourgeoisie of the developing countries which had to be wooed. The native bourgeoisie of the newly independent nations, with strong xenophobic sentiment against the colonial powers, came to be regarded by the Soviet leaders as a powerful potential ally in the communist drive for world domination. The past errors of communist strategy had to be corrected and a new policy outlined.¹⁵

The new strategy aims at freezing Soviet territorial positions in Europe, and at outflanking the Western powers in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America. Khrushchev's and Bulganin's trip to India, Burma, and Afghanistan in 1955 was the first visible sign of the new emphasis. Since the announcement of the Soviet Seven-Year Plan at the Twenty-first Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1959, in which the USSR took up the task of surpassing the West in the economic field, the Soviet activities in the developing countries were further intensified, and include various forms of economic assistance and credits, the sending of

14. Herbert Marcuse, *Soviet Marxism; a Critical Analysis* (New York: A. Knopf, 1961), pp. 156-157.

15. See, especially, Wladyslaw W. Kulski, *Peaceful Co-existence: An Analysis of Soviet Foreign Policy* (Chicago: H. Regnery, 1959), p. 217.

specialists, the training of technicians from the underdeveloped countries, the maintaining of schools for students from these countries, the creating of various friendship societies, the concluding of cultural agreements, the infiltrating of trade unions, and the organizing of various contact organizations in Asia and Africa, and, above all, a determined policy of cooperation with the nationalist movements in certain developing countries.

The Soviet method of detaching an emerging nation from the Western camp follows a familiar pattern. There is a considerable amount of resentment in the underdeveloped areas against the former or present colonial masters, who all happen to belong to the West. It is an historical accident that, unlike the United States, the Soviet Union is not allied with any colonial power. It can therefore appear to many colonial countries as being above suspicion, and it freely poses as a defender of the rights of the underdeveloped nations. The Soviet Union and other communist countries can make offers of economic assistance to former colonial nations without being suspected of encroaching upon their economic independence, while the economic assistance from the Western countries often bears the stigma of neo-colonialism in the eyes of the leaders and peoples of the emergent nations. The Communist propaganda never fails to point out and emphasize this danger. Furthermore, the USSR, with its apparent rise from a backward nation to its present political and economic power, much impresses some leaders of the developing countries. The communist claim that this success is entirely due to the correctness of Marxist-Leninist ideology, on which the Soviet society is based, may perhaps appear true to certain politicians and intellectuals of the underdeveloped countries. Few people would bother to investigate whether such rapid growth was a result of an ideology rather than of a government organization based on a dictatorship of a particularly ruthless form.

In the Soviet thinking, an ultimate communist victory in the underdeveloped areas is regarded as a certainty. It is understood, however, that such a victory cannot always come immediately, and that the disintegration of the colonial system is a highly complex process. Where the local communists were sufficiently strong, as was the case of China, Viet-Nam, Korea and the Mongolian People's Republic, the strategy was rather simple because problems of political power and socialization could be handled simultaneously. The Russians are fully aware that, in a majority of cases, the process of disintegration of the colonial system must be a long process as the local communist parties seldom are strong enough to assume a leading role in the struggle for national independence, although it is taken for granted that they will become the dominant force eventually.¹⁶

In discussing the communist approach to the national bourgeoisie of the

16. E. Zhukov, "Raspad kolonial'noi sistemi imperializma," *Partiinaiia zhizn*, No. 16 (August, 1956), p. 42.

underdeveloped countries, a distinction should be made between four different categories of countries:

(1) *Countries which have not yet achieved political independence.* Here the Soviet Union participates in the movement for independence by means of political pressures, propaganda and other methods, such as special political training of native cadres. Other communist countries take their share in these activities according to their abilities and available facilities. Besides the Soviet Union and Communist China, Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic, in particular, have been very active in the area of political and technical training of cadres from the developing countries. Though most of these countries have local communist parties, other forces have to be counted with in the struggle for national liberation:

The workers are not the only force waging the struggle against imperialism for national liberation. Peasants, artisans, merchants, industrialists, intelligentsia, including students, lower officials and officers, actively participate in the struggle in the colonial and dependent countries.

The communists must not hesitate to join forces not only with these elements but also with local aristocracy and the representatives of propertied classes if necessary:

Furthermore, even some feudal elements (khans and princes) are driven into the general stream of the movement for national liberation... It is obvious that in view of the great variety of the participants of the anti-imperialist struggle for national liberation, the struggle is waged under various slogans. Frequently at the helm of the struggle appear leaders of political parties representing the interests of propertied classes of the colonial or semi-colonial countries who also fight against the imperialist oppression and for national liberation.¹⁷

It is admitted that the classical concept of an alliance between the communists and the peasantry is difficult to realize because "the peasants, although representing the overwhelming majority of the population, are dispersed, internally split and do not constitute a united compact mass." In contrast to the peasantry, the national bourgeoisie represents the "best organized force, with the best trained cadres, which is in a position to put forward an independent political program."¹⁸ The communists therefore must come to an agreement with the bourgeoisie regardless of ideological differences:

As the national bourgeoisie actively participates and sometimes leads the national, anti-imperialist, struggle, its nationalist ideology must not become an unsurmountable obstacle for a cooperation and alliance between the bourgeoisie and the toiling masses in the struggle against imperialism.

It is obvious that there is a possibility of cooperation between the communists and those bourgeois nationalists who oppose against national enslavement and fight for national sovereignty and independence.¹⁹

17. *Ibid.*

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 42-43.

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 45-46.

This cooperation of the communists with the native bourgeoisie is, of course, a temporary phenomenon. The reappraisal of the role of the bourgeoisie in the communist strategy does not mean its full rehabilitation or an admission of the permanence of its political leadership. The communist strategists are fully aware that the native bourgeoisie represents a class totally incompatible with the communist system, and that it must be eliminated in due time. The basic division of the world into two camps remains valid in the long-term sense, as was admitted at a conference of Soviet Orientalists held in 1956:

The co-existence of two opposite world economic systems, the capitalist and the socialist, and of two world markets, as well as the fact that the world socialist system is getting stronger and proves its superiority over the capitalist system, remain the principal and decisive factors in the international situation.²⁰

The basic incompatibility between the bourgeois and socialist ideology has been confirmed by another ideological article in which a clear statement was made that "the peaceful coexistence of capitalist and socialist states means neither a termination nor a weakening of the ideological struggle," being merely a "renunciation of war as a means for solving conflicts between the governments." The communists, convinced of their eventual victory, regard peaceful coexistence as a phenomenon of a limited duration designed to eliminate the war "until a full victory of socialism is accomplished."²¹ The bourgeois protagonists of the peaceful coexistence idea are warned not to interpret this temporary phenomenon as a *status quo* in the relations between capitalism and socialism because it is simply impossible "to stop the course of history and give up the struggle for social progress."²² It is emphasized that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has always insisted that "a peaceful coexistence of states with a different government structure has never meant and will never mean a coexistence of conflicting ideologies, those of socialism and capitalism."²³ The purely temporary role of the bourgeoisie during the stage of transition from capitalism to socialism was recently stressed by a Soviet specialist on the developing countries:

It is quite certain that the bourgeoisie, as an independent class, has no future under socialism. Nevertheless, during the transition to socialism that part of the bourgeoisie which agrees to cooperate with the toiling class can occupy a worthy place in the new society and find application for its knowledge and organizational experience.²⁴

20. V. V. Balabushevich, In "Diskusiia ob ekonomicheskikh i politicheskikh positsiakh natsional'noi burzhuzii v stranakh Vostoka," *Sovetskoe vostokovedenie*, No. 2 (1957), p. 174.

21. "Mirnoe sosushchestvovanie ne oznachaet oslableniia ideologicheskoi bor'by," *Kommunist*, XXXIX, No. 8 (May, 1962), p. 61.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 67.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 62.

24. Viktor Leonidovich Tiagunenkov, *Bypassing capitalism* (Moscow: Novosti Press Agency Pub. House, 1966(?)), p. 76.

(2) *Countries which have already reached national independence, and in which the national bourgeoisie is the leading political force.* The prominent representatives of this category are India, Ceylon, Burma, Iran, etc., in general, most of the so-called "neutral" or "uncommitted" nations. The Soviet Union regards the governments of these countries as potential allies. The Soviet attitude can be summed up as a policy of not doing anything to antagonize the national bourgeoisie of these countries. The attitude to these governments is determined by a recognition that a third force, in the form of non-aligned nations, is essential for the Soviet goals. However, the earlier quoted statements reveal the fact that, in the communist view, the world is split into communist and non-communist camps, and the so-called neutrals are merely those nations against whom the full weight of Soviet power is not yet committed. There is some evidence that, even now, the Soviet Union recognizes as non-aligned only those nations which lean more heavily towards the Soviet bloc rather than genuine neutrals who desire to maintain their neutrality as between the West and the communist bloc. Viewing the world as an arena of struggle between great powers in which small and backward nations do not matter, the USSR is well aware that the independence of the so-called neutrals is largely a result of the West's power to check the communist ambitions. It can be assumed that the future of their neutrality will depend on the relative strength and the policies of the Western and the communist camps.

(3) *Countries which are linked with the West economically, politically or militarily.* In this situation, the activities of the communists are directed against the present governments and their Western commitments, with the primary objective of detaching them from their contacts with the West. For that purpose, the communists are ready to work with any party or group, in the hope that a situation can be created in which they can seize power. Parliamentary manoeuvring, subversion, bribery, infiltration of armed forces and of anti-communist ruling parties and governments, guerrilla warfare or armed terrorism, are a few examples of the great variety of means at the disposal of communist agents in the developing countries. The communists, exploiting mass poverty and social injustice, are free to promise anything, and to pose as champions of social and national reform. It is often advantageous to find a magnetic leader, capable of influencing the masses, whose charisma could contribute more to the communist victory than can the communist ideology.

Naturally, the methods which the communists employ in their operations in countries of this category are equally applicable to the other three categories, except perhaps that the means used in countries dominated by national bourgeoisie, have to be selected more carefully in order not to antagonize or alienate real or potential allies represented in the governments of these countries.

(4) *National Democracy.* The "independent states of national democracy" are

regarded by the Soviet bloc as the most important and best suited for a close cooperation with the communist powers. The countries of this category are considered to be states in transition towards a "higher" phase on the non-capitalist road of development.

While the notion of "national democracy" is not identical with people's democracy, it nevertheless evolved from it as a result of the Soviet effort to find a governmental form which would justify a regime based on a coalition between the communist and non-communist parties. In this respect there is more than a superficial resemblance between the two concepts, both of which represent a political system of transition to the socialist stage of society. The essential difference lies in the fact that "people's democracy" presupposes a dominant role of the communist party in the coalition, whereas "national democracy" does not stress the necessity of a communist domination, and concedes a more prominent role to the national bourgeoisie. The fact that this transitional regime does not require the "hegemony" of the proletariat, but "that the socialist transformation can be carried out by the bourgeoisie" is the most significant feature of "national democracy." All that the communists want during the stage of "national democracy" is a broad freedom of action to enable them to create the conditions for a successful seizure of power through a series of measures such as an agrarian reform, large-scale industrialization and nationalization. During this transitional stage, the hope is to develop enough strength to establish, in due time, a socialist state along Marxist-Leninist lines.

The concept of national democracy made its formal appearance in the so-called *New Communist Manifesto*, a declaration of representatives of the eighty-one communist parties, meeting in Moscow, November-December, 1960.²⁵ It was, in essence, incorporated into the new Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, adopted by the Twenty-second Congress in October, 1961. A detailed theoretical elaboration of the notion of national democracy appeared in the *Kommunist*, xxxviii, No. 8 (May, 1961).²⁶ National democracy was defined as

a state which consistently upholds its political and economic independence, fights against imperialism and its military blocs, against military bases on its territory, a state which rejects dictatorial and despotic methods of government, a state in which the people are insured broad democratic rights and freedoms (freedom of speech, press, assembly, demonstrations, establishment of political parties and social organizations), the opportunity to work for the enactment of an agrarian reform and other democratic and social changes, and for participation in shaping government policy.²⁷

In the communist vocabulary, the name "national democracy," like its

25. An English translation of the Manifesto in Dan N. Jacobs, ed., *The New Communist Manifesto and related documents* (2d ed., New York: Harper, 1962), pp. 9-47.

26. B. Ponomarev, "O gosudarstve natsional'noi demokratii," *Kommunist*, xxxviii, No. 8 (May, 1961), p. 33.

27. "The New Communist Manifesto" in Jacobs, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

predecessor, "people's democracy," is a term of approval. Only the select are eligible to be classed as states of national democracy. Nationalism, in the communist interpretation, is not always a good name. There may be "good" nationalism as well as "bad" nationalism, and so the communists had to provide a criterion for distinguishing between the two. According to the *Political Dictionary*, nationalism is a bourgeois ideology, and as such, it is

hostile to the final aims of the working class (the liquidation of exploitation and construction of socialism and communism) which can only be achieved through the unification of the workers of all nations and the pursuance of a policy of proletarian internationalism.

Nationalism in the dependent countries, however, which is directed against feudalism and colonial oppression, is regarded as progressive. The *Political Dictionary* quotes Lenin in support of this statement:

In every bourgeois nationalism of an oppressed nation is a general democratic content aimed against the oppression, and therefore we unconditionally support such a content.²⁸

It is conceded that, in such a case, bourgeois nationalism may outgrow its narrow class interests.²⁹ At the same time, it is cautioned that the value of bourgeois nationalism should not be overrated. While nationalism in the underdeveloped countries has its positive features as an enemy of imperialism, it contains elements which go counter the interests of the masses:

There is a reason for asserting that, in the ideology of nationalism in the contemporary East, the notions of national community also have anti-imperialist and anti-feudal content. In this context, nationalism itself acquires certain features of an anti-imperialist ideology. However, it would be erroneous to overlook the reactionary side of this principle which is present already at that stage. In connection with the class nature of bourgeois nationalism and its final aims, the idea of national community is used to prevent the class self-determination of the masses and the awakening of their political consciousness in order to win and strengthen the rule of the bourgeoisie over the rest of the nation. This finds its expression in the preaching of class peace and class cooperation which can be found, in an extensive measure, in the press and oral pronouncements of certain national leaders.³⁰

Following the same line of thought, the Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union of 1961 made a distinction between the "nationalism of the oppressed nations" and that of the "oppressor nations." While "nationalism of the oppressor nations" is bad *per se*, "nationalism of the oppressed nations" has a dual aspect. It contains "a general democratic element," and is therefore worthy of communist support. On the other hand, the same

28. *Politicheskii slovar*, Pod red. B. N. Ponomareva (2. izd.; Moskva: Gosudarstvennoe izd-vo polit. lit-ry, 1958), p. 378-379.

29. Karen Nersesovich Brutents, *Protiv ideologii sovremennogo kolonializma* (Moskva: Gos. izd-vo sotsial'no ekonomicheskoi lit-ry, 1961), p. 158.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 192. Brutents referred to President Nasser of the United Arab Republic.

nationalism also expresses "the ideology and interests of the reactionary exploiting top stratum." Similarly, there is a "good" and a "bad" bourgeoisie. While the bourgeoisie of the imperialist countries is naturally bad, the national bourgeoisie "in those colonial, one-time colonial, and dependent countries where it is not connected with the imperialist circles is objectively interested in accomplishing the basic tasks of an anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolution." However, this is a temporary phenomenon because

as the contradictions between the working people and the propertied classes grow and the class struggle inside the country becomes more aggravated, the national bourgeoisie shows an increasing inclination to compromise with imperialism and domestic reaction.³¹

The shortcomings of bourgeois nationalism are shown as even more striking if they are compared with the virtues of Marxist-Leninist ideology:

As an ideology of the national liberation movement, bourgeois nationalism is even more limited in view of the fact that there is at the present time a socialist, Marxist-Leninist ideology, the ideology of the working class and its communist party which, with a maximum completeness and consistence, expresses the idea of the national liberation.³²

Marxist-Leninist socialism is extolled as a genuine philosophy of national liberation comprising "the whole people" instead of merely the bourgeoisie. In contrast to bourgeois nationalism which, by definition, is limited in scope, socialism is presented as the only form of nationalism capable of representing the aspirations of the entire nation, including those of the working class which bourgeois nationalism is likely to ignore:

Expressing the interests of the proletariat, socialist ideology is of the entire people and is directed against all forms of oppression and exploitation. National enslavement and racial discrimination, national privileges and national egoism are incompatible with socialist ideology. Socialism presupposes the full liberation, social progress and national prosperity of all nations. In this way, socialist ideology consistently carries out the idea of national liberation.³³

These sources indicate that the Soviet leaders only reluctantly accept bourgeois nationalism as an ally in the overall strategy for increasing the influence of the Soviet Union in the developing countries. Their acceptance of a cooperation with the national bourgeoisie is not unqualified. The communist attitude to the national bourgeoisie and to the national movements in the developing countries is a matter of expediency determined by the degree of political benefit it can derive from using them against the West. It is obvious that not all national movements in the developing countries are acceptable to the Soviet Union.³⁴ Nor is the Soviet Union ready to

31. Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Draft), 1961, translated in *The Communist Blueprint for the Future*, pp. 144-145.

32. Brutents, *op. cit.*, p. 200.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 200.

34. Soviet writers emphatically reject, as erroneous and invalid, the claim that the bourgeoisie alone is the leading force in national-liberation movements. K.

support all such national regimes whether bourgeois or not. Only those regimes which qualify as "independent states of national democracy" are eligible for full moral, political, and economic support. The list of the actual beneficiaries of national democracy is likely to fluctuate. A general criterion as to which country is a national democracy is still lacking, and the Soviet theoreticians speak merely in generalities, leaving the decision concerning a country's status to concrete cases. Like in the case of people's democracy, a state of national democracy is that country which the Soviet leaders have designated as such.³⁵ Some negative characteristics determining which country cannot be a national democracy, were provided by Ponomarev in the above mentioned article. As a basis for the eligibility of each country as a national democracy, Ponomarev quotes the definition from the *New Communist Manifesto*.³⁶ Governments of those countries which are members of any defense alliance with the West are excluded by definition, *e.g.*, Pakistan, Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines. Similarly, all countries which permit Western military bases on their territories also are disqualified, for example, Tunisia, Libya, Kenya, Morocco, and Liberia. Furthermore, since dictatorial and despotic methods of rule are said to be incompatible with the notion of national democracy, certain other countries were found ineligible, *e.g.*, the United Arab Republic because of its "administrative measures" taken against the "leading representatives of the working class." Iraq belongs in the same category in view of its "repressive methods."³⁷ Moreover, since the *New Communist Manifesto* expressed its displeasure with a number of other countries which keep in jail "the courageous sons and daughters of the working class and the fighters for democracy,"³⁸ it can be safely assumed that all the following countries were equally ineligible for the status of national democracy at that time; the United States, Spain, Portugal, Japan, West Germany, Greece, Iran, Pakistan, the United Arab

Ivanov, "The National and Colonial Question Today," *International Affairs*, IX, 5 (May, 1963), p. 4.

35. National democracy was defined as a "non-communist regime committed to internal development goals, tolerant of its own communist movement, and friendly to the Soviet Union and associated states." Robert C. Tucker, "The Deradicalization of Marxist Movements," *American Political Science Review*, LXI, No. 2 (June 1967), p. 344.

36. See *supra*, p. 164.

37. Ponomarev, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-44. Ponomarev finds Iraq's attitude particularly disappointing because its government "came to power as a result of an active support extended to it by the toilers and their democratic organizations," (pp. 44-45). At the time when Ponomarev wrote his study of national democracy, Egypt's stock was low in the Soviet Union. While Ponomarev thought Egypt unworthy of being national democracy in 1961, Egypt was found eligible to follow immediately after people's democracies in the May Day slogans of 1965. (Cf. Wolfgang Berner, "Moskau und die arabische Revolution," *Ostprobleme*, XVIII, No. 3 (Feb. 11, 1966), p. 68).

38. Jacobs, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

Republic, Jordan, Iraq, Argentina, Paraguay, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, the Union of South Africa, the Sudan, and probably other not expressly mentioned countries.

Although the *New Communist Manifesto*, which officially introduced the notion of national democracy into the communist vocabulary, has brought up to date the list of people's democracies, it failed to enumerate the actual national democracies by name. Ponomarev made a special mention of Cuba, Guinea, Ghana, Mali, and Indonesia, without expressly stating that these countries were already states of national democracy. He also pointed out that the Congolese nation followed the same path of independence but was stopped by the "Belgian monopolists" and "revolting traitors."³⁹

As during the early period of people's democracy, an ideological interpretation of national democracy in terms of the Marxist-Leninist theory of the state is conspicuously missing. National democracy is obviously another transitional political system which is supposed to provide a governmental framework for the establishment of socialism, bypassing the capitalist stage of development. To be sure, national democracy is not the only way towards this goal. This is apparent from Ponomarev's cautious statement:

It is not impossible that the path to a non-capitalist development in certain countries may proceed through the governmental forms of national democracy.⁴⁰

Obviously, national democracy is neither a dictatorship of the proletariat nor a joint revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. In view of the great emphasis on the role of the national bourgeoisie in the underdeveloped countries, one should expect that national democracy would be described as another form of bourgeois state or, in the Marxist-Leninist terminology, a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Nowhere, however, has an attempt been made in the Soviet literature to interpret national democracy as such a dictatorship. The accent is on nationalism and the anti-imperialist nature of the new political system, without any comment as to the place of the new system within the Soviet theory of the state.

In his analysis of the revolution leading to the establishment of national democracy, Ponomarev enumerated a number of characteristic features which were strongly reminiscent of the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the people's democratic state in its early stage. According to him, this revolution is

- (1) an anti-imperialist revolution directed against the rule of imperialist powers;
- (2) an anti-feudal revolution, directed against the feudal and "medieval" remnants of the existing social system, especially tribal divisions;

39. Ponomarev, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 47.

- (3) it is also a national-liberation revolution because it aims at the establishment of national independence; and,
 (4) it is simultaneously a democratic revolution which introduces democratic liberties and institutions.⁴¹

While it is not expressly asserted that national democracy is a mere preparatory stage for the establishment of socialism, it is clear that the Soviet theoreticians expect the states of national democracy to follow the non-capitalist form of development, with the working class and the peasantry playing the leading part in the process. It seems obvious that the Soviet Union would not be satisfied with every kind of socialism but that it wants it to be the Marxist-Leninist brand. Though neither the *New Manifesto* nor the new *Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* say so expressly, other theoreticians have indicated what kind of socialism is desirable. Potekhin stresses that it is the "scientific socialism" which is expected to prevail in Africa, and rejects both British Labor Party socialism as well as French rightist socialism. Similarly, the so-called "African socialism" is for him merely and "instrument designed to deceive the toiling masses in the interest of the capitalist development."⁴²

In another article, the same author especially rejected that form of African socialism which preaches the compatibility of socialism with the existence of private enterprises, and the theory that the socialist society is a society of "equal petty producers." He deplored the attitude of some African leaders who apparently desire socialism and the abolition of the exploitation of man by man, yet are "unwilling to accept the scientific theory of socialism." He further expressed his disapproval of the tendency on the part of some leaders to exaggerate the importance of the specific features of African life, such as its allegedly "classless character."⁴³

G. Mirskii and V. Tiagunenکو also reject the so-called "national variants of socialism," such as the Arab, Indian, and African socialisms, and point out that the spokesmen of this kind of socialism

41. Ponomarev, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

42. I. I. Potekhin, "Nekotorye problemy afrikanistiky v svete reshenii XXII s"ezda KPSS," *Narody Azii i Afriki*, No. 1 (1962), 15. It is interesting to note that, despite all the emphasis on the necessity of non-capitalist development in the emerging countries, it is still admitted that a different development, i.e., capitalist, would be acceptable to the communists. See the following statement: "Non-capitalist development is a necessary and inevitable stage of the national liberation revolution. However, it is not an obligatory law." Tiagunenکو, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

43. I. I. Potekhin, "On 'African Socialism,' a Reply to My Opponents," *International Affairs*, ix, No. 1 (Jan. 1963), pp. 76-77. At any rate, a "mere willingness" of a government to follow a non-capitalist path does not make such a government already socialistic. (See, for example, G. Kim and A. Kaufman, "Nekapitalisticheskoe razvitiie: uspekhi i trudnosti," *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn*, XIV, No. 12 (1967), 101). On African socialism and its non-Marxist character, see: L. V. Thomas, *Le socialisme et l'Afrique* (Paris: Le livre africain, 1966).

do not speak of destroying capitalistic exploitation but want an improvement of capitalism which could be shielded from crises, abuses, and could be made just and capable of entering the stage of socialism by a peaceful evolution. The spreading of ideas about this kind of supra-class socialism aims at taking away the masses from a thorough solution of fundamental social problems with the final objective of preventing the growth of class consciousness.⁴⁴

Moreover, Khrushchev himself, in his speech in Sofia on May 18, 1962, rejected such socialist pretensions, stressing that only the working class, in alliance with the peasantry, is capable of accomplishing the social transformation in the lesser developed countries:

In a number of Asian and African countries that have cast off the chains of colonialism they say today that they are building socialism. ... But what kind of socialism do they have in mind? What do they mean by it? Which are the forces they would lean on in building socialism?... And those leaders who really have the best interests of the people, the working masses, at heart will sooner or later have to realize that only by leaning on the working class as the most consistent, most revolutionary class of society, in alliance with the peasantry and with the support of all progressive forces, can they bring about victory and the correct solution of fundamental social problems.⁴⁵

The theory of national democracy, to a greater extent than the theory of people's democracy which was essentially a doctrinal interpretation of the past events, is intended as a meaningful guide to action for the communist parties operating in the underdeveloped countries.⁴⁶ While the present emphasis is on cooperation with the national bourgeoisie in these countries, the Soviet theory of revolution offers a wide variety of methods aiming at the political isolation of the bourgeoisie which proved so highly effective earlier in post-war Eastern Europe. The arsenal of communist weapons contains various measures designed to undermine the economic power of the bourgeoisie, e.g., nationalization of industry, banking, foreign trade, and other methods of transfer of economic functions to the state. The communists intend to concentrate in their hands as many key positions in the government as possible. Those positions which already are in communist

44. G. Mirskii and V. Tiagunenkov, "Tendentsii i perspektivy natsional'no-osvoboditel'nykh revoliutsii," *Mirovaia ekonomika i mezhdunarodnoe otnosheniia*, No. 11 (November, 1961), pp. 29-30.

45. N. S. Khrushchev, Speech in Sofia, May 18, 1962. Translation in *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, xiv, No. 20 (June 3, 1962), p. 7.

46. Richard Lowenthal, very appropriately, described the struggle for national democracy as "a struggle for communist leadership within the united national front, for the extension of communist influence on the nationalist government and the occupation of key positions in the political, military and economic state machine, yet conducted wherever possible within the framework of the existing nationalist regimes—without aiming at the overthrow of popular nationalist leaders at this stage. Richard Lowenthal, "National Democracy" and the Post-colonial Revolution: [A report delivered at the] Fourth International Conference on World Politics, Athens, Greece, September 17-22, 1962. [n.p., n.d.] p. 16. This evaluation of the role of "national democracy" is practically identical with that of "people's democracy."

hands are expected to serve as operating bases for a communist revolution by administrative measures. The various methods which were suggested by the theorists of people's democracy for the seizure of power by the communists, *e.g.*, political demonstrations, seizure of certain government agencies or military establishments by force, and a variety of parliamentary tactics aiming at the defeat of the bourgeois elements of the coalition, are equally applicable to the countries of national democracy. The present de-emphasis on the reliance on local communist parties, and the Soviet recommendations that these parties follow the leadership of non-communist nationalists, merely proves that the Soviet Union has even further abandoned doctrinal schematism in its approach, a trend which became apparent earlier in Sobolev's interpretation of people's democracy.

The Soviet notion that the bourgeoisie should lead the nation towards socialism is an innovation of a considerable magnitude even when the limited duration of the role of the bourgeoisie is taken into consideration. To be sure, the significance of the bourgeoisie in the people's democratic state was by no means negligible. Nevertheless, both in theory and in practice, the emphasis, from the very inception of people's democracy, was on the leading role of the communist parties and the entirely secondary importance of the bourgeoisie. Never, not even during the liberal interpretation of people's democracy such as was undertaken by Eugene Varga in 1947, has it been conceded that the bourgeoisie could play a dominant part in the march towards socialism. National democracy appears to be thus far the only political system which is expected to make possible an attainment of socialism (*i.e.*, Marxist-Leninist socialism) under the leadership of the bourgeoisie.

Though it is conceded that the bourgeoisie is most likely to be the leading political force in the developing countries, the Soviet interpretation of national democracy seems to have left the door open for any other element as long as it is capable of rallying the nationalist forces:

Such a state [*i.e.*, national democracy] must reflect the interests not of any one particular class, but of the widest strata of the population of the newly-free nations.⁴⁷

Such a rallying force could be a military junta, or an officer, a guerrilla leader, a prominent member of the intelligentsia, or practically anybody with a sufficiently charismatic personality. Since it is understood that the political leader during the stage of national democracy will be in power only for a limited time, the communists hope that anybody can serve their purposes in the long run.

In this grand design for the developing countries, the USSR appears to be in a favorable position by virtue of the fact that it is not allied to any colonial power, and so is free to associate itself with any convenient move-

47. Tiagunenکو, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

ment, action and disturbance in the colonial or quasi-colonial countries of the world. It could easily support claims such as those of India to Goa and Kashmir, Egypt to the Suez Canal, or independence of Angola, Algeria, Congo, or Castro's guerrilla war; it can freely make promises of political or military intervention in support of any action against a colonial power. The military might of the Soviet Union or Communist China, though thus far untested, is a powerful factor in the struggle for the friendship of the non-aligned nations. The ignorance concerning the real nature of a communist dictatorship which sometimes prevails among some political leaders of certain developing areas is another factor which makes possible the concept of a national coalition with the communists. Another reason why certain leaders of uncommitted nations find it difficult to see anything wrong with the communist system is the fact that this kind of regime has an undeniable appeal to many of them, because it represents the kind of personal dictatorship which they themselves are aspiring to.⁴⁸ The first stage of the people's democratic revolution in a colonial or quasi-colonial country may appear acceptable to genuine nationalists, the more so since the communists are likely to observe a cautious silence about the next stage. Native political leaders are primarily interested in short-term objectives for which the well organized and trained communists usually have a ready-made practical solution. In the post-war national committees of Eastern Europe the communists were, as a rule, the only members fully informed about what was coming next, and were thus able to issue definite directives to the uninformed or confused coalition partners. Similarly, the well prepared communists in a coalition government of an underdeveloped country believe that they could supply solutions for various problems. In the developing countries, the land reform, industrialization, and an extended democratic basis of government are goals to which many progressive leaders are ready to subscribe. It should be only a matter of skill for the communists to utilize

48. The political systems of certain Asian and African countries were described as either "tutelary democracies" or "modernizing oligarchies."

The former type is "equipped with the formal paraphernalia of Western democracy (from broad suffrage to representative legislature), the executive wields effective power, typically supported by a dominant nationalist party (with considerable variations in the relationship between the government bureaucracy and the party). Their ruling elite is normally imbued with democratic values and a strong zeal for modernization."

In the "modernizing oligarchy," parties are "relegated to an inferior role (and may even be eliminated, as was until recently the case in Pakistan). The substance of authority rests in the executive or the military, or both." Wolfgang H. Kraus, "Notes on Democracy and Leadership in the New Afro-Asian States." In Kurt London, ed., *New Nations in a Divided World: the International Relations of the Afro-Asian States* (New York: Praeger, 1963) pp. 112-113. Some of these political figures were leaders of the liberation movements and, "as a consequence, leadership in many instances retains an intensely personal charismatic character that defies the careful differentiation of governmental roles and jurisdictions regarded as normal in contemporary Western constitutional system." *Ibid.*, p. 114.

their influence for carrying over the impetus from the democratic stage of the national revolution into the subsequent revolution aiming at the establishment of a communist regime. Tropkin's study on communist strategy and tactics, designed primarily for use by communists in foreign countries, is explicit enough on that point:

V. I. Lenin has proved that a long interval between the victorious bourgeois-democratic revolution and the forthcoming socialist revolution was out of the question in the period of imperialism...The bourgeois-democratic and the socialist revolutions become two links of a single chain, two strategic stages of one revolutionary-liberating movement and of one process of powerful people's revolution which defeats all exploiters one after another, and creates at first a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry followed by the dictatorship of the proletariat. *The brief interval between the democratic and socialist revolutions is not represented by the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, but by the transformation of the people's democratic revolution into a socialist one*, during which period the proletariat, in alliance with the peasantry and other democratic strata of the population, exercises the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the people.⁴⁹

Thus the new concept of national democracy is a theoretical formula which is designed to meet situations where some sort of a transitional system appears necessary. People's democracy has acquired a connotation which identifies this form of government too closely with a communist-dominated state. It would be politically inconvenient to describe the states created from the former colonies as people's democracies despite the fact that some of the political leaders of these nations often have displayed their philosophical affection for the Marxist-Leninist ideology. It is significant that even Cuba, with her leader's open allegiance to the cause of communism, was described as a national democracy rather than a people's democracy. It is too early to say whether national democratic countries will preserve their status of national democracy for a longer time or whether they will soon develop into people's democracies.⁵⁰ The *New Manifesto's* repeated emphasis

49. Tropkin, *op. cit.*, p. 11. (Italics supplied.)

50. The question whether national democracy can reach the stage of socialism directly or whether it has to pass through the stage of people's democracy was answered recently. While the Soviets sources seem to indicate that a national democracy can develop into a socialist state without any further intermediate stage, at least one communist source, inspired by the Chinese communists, regards national democracy as only one of the successive transitional stages. In the *Cahiers de Gamboma*, which is a name given by Belgian editors to a collection of political and military instructions for the partisans in the Congo (1964-65), national democracy is the first stage in the political development of a country. National democracy, according to these sources, subsequently changes into "new democracy," which is a form introduced into the communist vocabulary by Mao Tse-tung by his work *On New Democracy*, as a name for a multi-class dictatorship. National democracy and new democracy are both lower stages of political development, and are followed by the stage of "people's democracy," and later, presumably, by the stage of full socialism as the last stage before reaching the era of full communism. See p. 168ff, *infra*.

on the revolutionary alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry seems to indicate that the national democracies will have to traverse some sort of a people's democratic stage before they reach full socialism. It is, of course, quite possible that the national democracies can attain the stage of socialism directly without any intermediate form. The communist theoreticians are likely to observe a cautious silence with regard to the transformation of a national democracy into a dictatorship of the proletariat. For the time being, it seems that the emphasis is on the originality of national democracy.

How successful the national democratic form is going to be for the establishment of Marxist-Leninist socialism is still an open question. From the countries designated as possible beneficiaries of national democracy only Cuba was recognized by the communists as a country already following a socialist path.

The success of an armed revolt such as the Cuban revolution, compared with the somewhat unconvincing record of accomplishments by parliamentary actions, could strengthen the position of those communists who advocate the necessity of an armed struggle as one superior to an evolutionary and gradual approach. In other words, the past events seem to indicate the effectiveness of the "Chinese" line over the "Russian" one, although it should be stressed, in fairness, that the Russians never excluded the possibility of a successful armed uprising, and gave to the "anti-imperialist" revolts their moral and often also material support. People's democracy, as a form of transition to socialism, has never been officially disavowed by the Soviet Union and, while the people's democratic approach has been somewhat subdued lately in favor of national democracy, there is no reason why it should not be revived any time. A possibility should not be discounted that new forms of struggle may emerge, perhaps patterned along the lines of the Cuban guerrilla strategy.⁵¹

Popular Front

It seems that national democracy still is not the definite answer to the question of what political form a state should adopt during the transition period in order to become eventually socialist. A realist reappraisal of the world situation has forced the Soviet leaders to new adjustments of the doctrine. Not only have various new people's democracies such as the Stanleyville Congo collapsed after brief, ephemeral, existence, but even some model national democracies such as Ghana and Indonesia⁵² failed to develop into socialist, *i.e.*, communist states. The disappointing performances

51. Ernesto Che Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1961), pp. 15-16.

52. Indonesia, once a promising candidate of national democracy, was condemned by Brezhnev for its "bestial brutality" in persecuting the members of the

of the national democracies compelled the Soviet ideologists to depart even farther from the theory and practice of the Marxist-Leninist revolution. It was pointed out earlier that national democracy was already a concession resulting from the apparent inability of the Soviet Union to bring about a conversion of other countries into communist states. While people's democracy required a revolutionary leadership by the proletariat (*i.e.*, by the communist party) during the transition, national democracy openly admitted a possibility of reaching the stage of socialism under the leadership of the bourgeoisie. Now it appears that the Soviet Union further lowered its ambitions, and is aiming for even more modest goals. Both people's democracy and national democracy envisaged an eventual adoption of Marxist-Leninist socialism. The Soviets, who now seem to prefer a long period of transition through coalition governments, are putting forward more limited programs. Instead of national democracy, a mere "united front" policy appears to be a more appropriate instrument by which the ultimate purposes may be achieved. It is the same revision trend which has manifested itself in the changes in the official concept of the means ever since the notion of parliamentarism was introduced into the concept of people's democracy. The basic idea behind this revisionist trend is the belief that communism can be spread by peaceful means at a time when the likelihood of a communist revolution appears to be more remote than in the immediate post-World War II years.⁵³

The special attention which was given in the Soviet Union to the Seventh Congress of the Comintern of 1935 upon the occasion of its thirtieth anniversary seems indicative of this general trend. It will be recalled that the Seventh Congress represented a sharp turn toward the right in the world communist movement. This Congress (in contrast to the Sixth Comintern Congress) suddenly discovered the virtues of parliamentary democracy. The extent of communist commentaries commemorating the thirtieth anniversary of the Seventh Congress was impressive and significant. A special conference was called to Moscow on October 4, 1965, at which the Soviet Union was represented by prominent names such as Suslov, Fedoseev,

Communist Party of Indonesia. Leonid I. Brezhnev, "Otchetnii doklad Tsentral'nogo komiteta KPSS XXIII s"ezdu Kommunisticheskoi partii Sovetskogo Soiuza. Doklad Pervogo sekretaria ts.k. tovarishcha L. I. Brezhneva 29 marta 1966 goda. *Pravda* (March 30, 1966).

53. Whether the ideological innovations are essentially tactical, resulting from a more realistic reappraisal of the situation, or whether they are "symptoms of a degenerative process, a decline of revolutionary commitment on the part of the post-Stalin Soviet leadership" cannot be answered within the framework of this study. The author of the present study inclines to the belief that the ideological changes result from the adjustment of the doctrine in the face of the present international realities. See more on this subject in Robert C. Tucker, "The Deradicalization of Marxist Movements," *American Political Science Review*, LXXI, No. 2 (June 1967), pp. 343-358.

Rumiantsev and Pospelov. While in 1935 nazism was the principal target of the speeches delivered at the Congress, the Moscow Conference found the uniting issue in the "American imperialism" against which the unity and determination of all "democratic and anti-imperialist" forces was demanded.⁵⁴ A similar conference met in Prague, Czechoslovakia, on October 21, 1965, with Ponomarev as featured speaker.⁵⁵

A vigorous support of the united front against "American imperialism" was the leading theme of the celebrations, although vocal protestations of the faithfulness to Marxist-Leninist socialist ideals were by no means absent. Rumiantsev extolled the values of parliamentary democracy, yet at the same time made it unmistakably clear that bourgeois democracy was not an end in itself, but rather a means to an end:

The communists rose to defend the bourgeois democracy against fascism not because they wanted to perpetuate the bourgeois-parliamentary machine. They rose to defend it for the purpose of strengthening democracy by limiting the power of capitalism, so as to create a democracy which would no longer be a bourgeois democracy, but would not be a socialist democracy either. This kind was envisaged at the Congress even though it was not called then "new democracy," a name which appeared only later.

Rumiantsev expanded on the same theme later in his speech in which he said the following:

Looking back over the past thirty years, we are fully justified in saying that the Marxist-Leninist parties have reached their greatest successes when they applied the legacy of the last Comintern Congress, and developed it creatively. At the time of the Seventh Congress the popular front was not meant as a mere weapon for the defense of the existing bourgeois-democratic liberties, but was to serve as a lever for pushing forward the entire struggle of the working class and its allies.⁵⁶

The official materials for the multi-volume edition of the History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union underlined the pre-proletarian nature of the popular front government:

The Congress emphasized that a popular front government was not yet a dictatorship of the proletariat, but that the communists would fully support such a government provided it would not attempt to restrain their activities nor would it try to limit the fight of the working class for its rights and interest.⁵⁷

A popular front has for the communists, and of course, the Soviet Union,

54. *Pravda*, Oct. 5, 1965.

55. On the renaissance of the popular front concept see: Heinz Brahm, "Der VII. Kominternkongress in neuem Glanz," *Ostprobleme*, xvii, No. 24 (Dec. 3, 1965), pp. 738-746.

56. A. Rumiantsev, "Istoricheskoe znachenie VII. kongressa Kominterna i sovremennoe kommunisticheskoe dvizhenie." *Kommunist*, xlii, No. 15 (Oct. 15, 1965), p. 24.

57. "VII kongress Kommunisticheskogo Internatsionala," *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, ix, No. 8 (Aug. 1965), p. 56.

two essential advantages. It does not require the communists to put forward any doctrinal demands, nor does it make necessary a decision as to who is to be the leader of the united front. It is simply a policy of a broad alliance for limited ends. A Soviet source makes the following statement with respect to a united front government:

Historical experience shows that the putting forward of preliminary terms to ensure, in advance, the hegemony of one or another class in the united front dooms it to failure.⁵⁸

Any power group can assume the leadership of the broad coalition:

The creation of a front and the beginning of the movement along the non-capitalist path are possible under the leadership of any democratic class, *e.g.*, workers, peasantry, urban petty bourgeoisie, progressive intelligentsia, including the revolutionary officers.⁵⁹

One thing should be kept always in mind. While the Russians are ready to pursue such limited objectives, they are always ready to try for more if the opportunity arises. There have been examples in the past when the Soviets suddenly turned away from the pragmatic pattern of cooperation with the leading non-communist powers, and employed a policy of increased risks. The intervention in Hungary was one example, the Soviet efforts at military and material support extended to Cuba and the Vietnamese communists are another.

58. Tiagunenکو, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

59. *Ibid.*, p. 54.

CHAPTER VI

VARIANTS OF THE THEORY OF PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY: SOME SELECTED PEOPLE'S REPUBLICS

The various theories of people's democracy expounded by the communist countries are far from uniform. At least in two countries—Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria—variations of some theoretical significance may be noted. True, these variations never affect the fundamental parts of the doctrine, such as the necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat for the transition to socialism, the leading role of the communist party and the recognition of the ideological leadership of the Soviet Union. But outside of the taboo issues, the scholars of these two countries have made an attempt to elaborate a doctrine of their own. This does not mean that these changes in the theory were adopted in Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria officially; it means rather, that these variations were granted a high degree of publicity both official and unofficial, without, however, any explicit commitments on the part of the respective communist parties or their leaders. Nor does it mean that the official Soviet theory has been abandoned in those countries; on the contrary, it continues to exist, but represents just one of several versions without any special claim to exclusiveness or even to predominance. Within the above-mentioned limitations, discussions about the correctness or incorrectness of this and that shade of the theory go on under the detached silence of the communist leadership; the scholastic debates concerning the interpretation of the utterances of the "classics" of Marxism-Leninism often take the form of violent polemics against real or imaginary opponents. The whole spectacle is entirely divorced from reality, but is apparently highly enjoyed by the participants who can write and talk with the comforting feeling that *de minimis non curat praetor*.

A somewhat different theory was formulated by Mao in 1940. His "new democracy" differed from "people's democracy" in that it conceded a certain role to capitalism though admittedly only temporarily. The concept of Chinese "new democracy" will be discussed later in this chapter.

Yugoslavia deserves a special mention here as the only communist country which has elaborated a doctrine of the state genuinely different from the Soviet pattern. If a real difference between the Soviet and the people's democratic form of the state is sought, the Yugoslav variety represents the only type showing some doctrinal originality in theory, if not also in practice.

For a time, it seemed that Yugoslavia might be joined by other countries,

such as Hungary and Poland. However, the Soviet military intervention in Hungary ended in bloodshed the illusion that the national-roads-to-socialism formula of the Twentieth Congress really heralded the possibility of true institutional divergences and a national autonomy for other communist countries. The Hungarian experience also turned Gomulka's original concept of Poland's own path to socialism into a precarious *modus vivendi* under the preservation of the concessions wrung from the Soviet Union in 1956.¹

This chapter also includes a discussion of some other variants of people's democracy which have something original to show, such as the People's Republic of Viet Nam which came into existence without any help from either the Soviet Union or Communist China. It also includes some more recent people's republics, such as Algeria, the Congo (Stanleyville), Cuba, and Zanzibar.

Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria

Both the Czechoslovak and the Bulgarian varieties of the theory of people's democracy represent a reaction against Sobolev's summary application of the doctrine of two revolutions to all countries of people's democracy.

As pointed out in Chapter II, the people's democratic revolution, according to Sobolev, had two obligatory stages, the bourgeois-democratic and proletarian socialist. In Sobolev's interpretation, which has become the official Soviet doctrine of people's democracy, the first revolutionary stage in the development of the people's democracy was "anti-feudal" as well as "anti-fascist and anti-imperialist," and resulted in the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, or "something akin" to that. The official theory asserts that the bourgeois-democratic revolution evolved into proletarian-socialist which in turn led to the establishment of an exclusive class dictatorship of the proletariat. To the extent that the term "bourgeois-democratic revolution" has any meaning, it presupposes an existence of a feudal system which it was supposed to overthrow. One

1. The "Polish way to socialism" failed to develop an independent theory of the state along the lines similar to Yugoslavia or China. Poland's political system is one of the people's democratic kind, with perhaps more emphasis on the national peculiarities, manifested in the recognition of a more significant place of the private small production sector, especially in agriculture, and a workers' participation in the management of state owned industrial enterprises. The form of government is a typical assembly government, though existing essentially on the paper (Konstantyn Grzybowski, "Po dwudziestu latach," *Życie literackie*, No. 29, (1964), an abbreviated German translation in *Ostprobleme*, xvi, No. 18 (Sept. 4, 1964), p. 521). The "Polish way to socialism" is characterized mainly by an absence of "external ideological ambitions," as noted by Brzezinski in his analysis of the Polish situation in his *The Soviet Bloc: Unity and Conflict* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), p. 356.

Czechoslovak communist scholar pointedly declared that "a bourgeois-democratic revolution which is not anti-feudal is nonsense."² The difficulty with Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria lies in the fact that neither had any feudal institutions at the time the concept of people's democracy made its appearance. It was scarcely feasible to put back into feudalism a country like Czechoslovakia which had been classed by the communists themselves among the countries with a highly developed capitalist system together with the United States, Great Britain, France, and others.³ In Bulgaria, feudalism was largely abolished after the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, and since then the door had been open for the rise of capitalism. There was apparently little willingness on the part of the Bulgarian scholars to accept Sobolev's assumption that the Nazis reintroduced feudalism in the occupied countries.⁴ The Czechs rejected the official doctrine as "dogmatic," "abstract," "a-prioristic."⁵ etc. The most outspoken critic of Sobolev's doctrine of people's democracy in Czechoslovakia became Ivan Bystřina, who first formulated his dissenting opinion in a dissertation submitted to the Law Faculty of the Lomonosov University in Moscow in 1955, under the title *People's Democratic Republic as a Political Form of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in Czechoslovakia*.⁶ Bystřina's dissertation was followed by three major monographs and a great many articles.⁷

2. Bystřina, *Lidová demokracie*, p. 95.

3. Bystřina, *op. cit.*, p. 115. Bystřina puts Czechoslovakia into the category of countries with highly developed capitalism in accordance with the original classification stated in the Program of the Communist International of 1928. Though this program mentioned explicitly only the United States, Germany, and England, and referred to other countries with a similar economic structure only as "etc.," it is obvious that Czechoslovakia with its highly developed industry belonged in this category and not in the next which the program called "countries with medium developed capitalism" "Spain, Portugal, Poland and Hungary, Balkan countries, etc." Communist International, *Programma Kommunistického internacionála* (Moskva: Gosudarstvennoe Izd-vo, 1928), p. 77.

4. See, for example, I. Bulov, "Strategické lozungy na Bulgarskate Komunistické Partia po selskii vupros," *Novo vreme*, No. 3 (1956), p. 21.

5. Ivan Bystřina, "Proti dogmatickému výkladu vzniku lidové demokratické zřízení v Československu" *Nová mysl*, No. 2 (February, 1957), pp. 147-48. *Nová mysl* is the official ideological organ of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party. As a sign of impartiality in the great debate, the editor stressed, in a note, that the article was a mere contribution to a discussion and that the editorial board was fully aware of the fact that Bystřina's article contained "a number of controversial theses," p. 147 note.

6. The original text of Bystřina's dissertation was not available to the author of the present study. However, an extensive report on the public defense of this dissertation was published in *Právník*, xciv, No. 1 (1955), pp. 61-68, under the title *Veřejná obhajoba disertace, "Lidové demokratická republika jako politická forma diktatury proletariátu v Československu" na právnické fakultě Moskevské státní university.*"

7. The three monographs are: J. Houška and K. Kára, *Otázky lidové demokracie* (Praba: Státní nakl. pol. lit., 1955); Ivan Bystřina, *Lidová demokracie* (Praha: Nakl.

In Bulgaria, the official Soviet theory of people's democracy was criticized by Zhak Natan, whose article appeared in the official ideological organ of the Bulgarian Communist Party. Natan asserted that the thesis concerning the bourgeois-democratic character of the first phase of the people's democratic revolution was not applicable to Bulgaria, inasmuch as the revolution there was socialist from its very beginning.⁸

In Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria, the various versions of the theory of people's democracy exist side by side. The number of those who still support the official Soviet theory apparently continues to decrease.⁹ The small group of Czechoslovak communist scholars who still insist that there is "no other road to socialism than that traversed by the Soviet Union" may be disregarded. This "theory" is a mere repetition of the now obsolete doctrine enunciated by Georgi Dimitrov. Far more significant is the group of authors who, like Sobolev, regard the people's democratic revolution, in its initial stage, as bourgeois-democratic. The position of this group was succinctly stated by Rolenc:

National democratic revolutions in the people's democracies are essentially revolutions of bourgeois-democratic character; however, they tend to pass quickly into socialist revolutions by transforming the democratic dictatorship into the proletarian dictatorship by means of a gradual strengthening of the power of the working class. This development is often accelerated by the fact that the bourgeoisie tries to recover the lost power by staging a counter-revolutionary coup. This very attempt reveals to the broad masses of the people the counter-revolutionary attitude of the bourgeoisie.¹⁰

According to Rolenc, the Czechoslovak national-democratic revolution, too, was essentially bourgeois-democratic. In Czechoslovakia, said Rolenc, "all progressive elements of the nation were united in a National Front under the leadership of the working class and its revolutionary party for the purpose of fighting for the liberation and the restitution of an independent Czechoslovakia." Rolenc's formulation is of course clearly an attempt to avoid an impasse into which the theory was driven by Sobolev. Rolenc apparently did not realize that he had grossly deviated from the Marxist-Leninist concept of the revolution. His theory seems to suggest that the national revolution has become a supra-class affair of the whole nation or, in other words, that the interest of the nation is superior to that of the class.

Československé Akademie Věd, 1957); M. Lakatoš, *Otázky lidové demokracie v Československu* (Praha: Nakl. Československé Akademie Věd, 1957). The number of articles is enormous. For the most important ones, see Bibliography.

8. Zhak Natan, "Noviat uchebnik po politicheska ikonomiia," *Novo vreme*, No. 4 (Apr., 1955), p. 81.

9. Cf. M. Lakatoš, "K článku Dr. Vl. Rolence K některým otázkám socialistické revoluce," *Právník*, xcvi, No. 6 (1958), p. 532. For Bulgaria, see "Nové bulharské práce o lidové demokratickém státu, revoluci a jejích etapách," *Právník*, xcvi, No. 5 (1957), pp. 437-44.

10. Vl. Rolenc, "K některým otázkám socialistické revoluce," *Socialistická zákonost*, No. 91 (1957), p. 544.

He was rebuked accordingly by another communist writer who pointed out that, in a struggle for national liberation, each class, including the working class, follows its own interest. For the achievement of its goals, the working class had to defeat the Nazis. It fought against them because its class interest happened to coincide with the liberation struggle of other classes, and not because the national interest was more important than the class interest. When the Nazis were defeated, the road was free for the working class to proceed with its plans toward the elimination and destruction of the bourgeoisie.¹¹ There is undoubtedly much Marxist-Leninist logic in this assertion. If the Czechoslovak and Bulgarian communists are unwilling to accept Sobolev's thesis concerning the restitution of feudalism by the Nazis, they must either end in a deviation like that of Rolenc, or must invent a special theory suited to local conditions.

The theory of people's democracy elaborated by Czechoslovak scholars appears in three main versions which can be summarized as follows:

(1) While the national-democratic revolution has exceeded the framework of capitalism, it has not resulted immediately in the setting up of a proletarian dictatorship, but has led merely to a transitional form of state in which the working class was the decisive political force, and which only later has evolved into a full dictatorship of the proletariat.¹² In other words, this theory presupposes an intermediate form between the bourgeois state and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

(2) Some Czechoslovak scholars found recourse in the wisdom of Mao Tse-tung. Thus the late Professor R. M. Foustka borrowed from Mao the name "new-democratic" to describe the national-democratic revolution in Czechoslovakia. However, according to Foustka, the "new-democratic" revolution in Czechoslovakia, unlike its Chinese counterpart, was no longer bourgeois-democratic, but just "democratic," i.e., it was limited exclusively to the political sphere. In support of his thesis, Foustka made a distinction between *political* and *social* revolutions. A political revolution consists in the seizure of power, in this case, by the proletariat. A social revolution consists in a transformation of the economic and social order, i.e., in the replacement of the capitalist system by a socialist system. According to Foustka, a successful political revolution is a *sine qua non* for the social revolution, because "without the seizure of power by the proletariat the social revolution cannot even begin." In other words, the political revolution is an inherent part of the social revolution.¹³

11. M. Lakatoš, "K článku Dr. Vl. Rolence K některým otázkám socialistické revoluce," *Právník*, xcvi, No. 6 (1948), p. 531.

12. Houška and Kára, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

13. Radim N. Foustka, "K diskusi o naší lidové demokracii," *Filosofický časopis*, No. 1 (1957), pp. 107-108. Foustka wrote before the Sino-Soviet dispute. Since the Czechoslovak communists strictly adhere to the Moscow line, it is unlikely that anyone of them would now seek an ideological support for his argument in the writings of Chinese communists.

Foustka found also an answer to the question of whether or not the Czechoslovak people's democracy was a dictatorship of the proletariat from the very beginning. In his view, the whole conceptual difficulty is due to the fact that the term "dictatorship of the proletariat" is not synonymous with the concept of the proletarian state, but is interpreted in a much more narrow sense, as an exclusive rule of the working class. From this point of view, only the Soviet form and the *mature* people's democratic form are genuine dictatorships of the proletariat. If interpreted in this narrow sense, the term "dictatorship of the proletariat" should not be applied to the various forms of state which emerge during the transition period between the national-democratic and socialist revolutions. Since only a socialist revolution can set up a dictatorship of the proletariat, the communists are confronted with the problem of how to classify governments which came into power as a result of a national-democratic revolution. Such governments could not be regarded as exclusive class dictatorships of the proletariat; however, they are not bourgeois governments either, because they are clearly dominated by the proletariat, promote its interests against the interests of the bourgeoisie, and follow strictly socialist objectives. Foustka tries to avoid a direct answer by merely asserting that people's democracies are states of a proletarian type without saying whether or not they are also dictatorships of the proletariat.¹⁴

(3) The most extensive and systematic theoretical treatment of Czechoslovak people's democratic variety is that elaborated by Ivan Bystřina.¹⁵

The essential points of Bystřina's analysis are as follows:

The struggle against fascism is not necessarily a part of a bourgeois-democratic revolution. Fascism is a rule of the reactionary stratum of the bourgeoisie, rather than a rule of feudal aristocracy. Bourgeois institutions cannot be overthrown by a "bourgeois" revolution, because this revolution is always directed only against the feudal system. An anti-fascist struggle may be a part of either a bourgeois and bourgeois-democratic revolution, or of a socialist revolution, depending on the circumstances.¹⁶ Neither in

14. Radim N. Foustka, "K diskusi o naší lidové demokracii," *Filosofický časopis*, No. I (1957), p. 114.

15. See p. 130, *supra*.

16. Bystřina, *Lidová demokracie*, p. 144. The Bulgarian scholars follow essentially the same line of thought. Popov classifies the European people's democracies in two categories. In the first group belong countries in which the people's democratic revolution was bourgeois-democratic, e.g., Rumania, Hungary, Poland and Albania; in the second category are Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia in which the overthrow of German fascism signified a simultaneous beginning of the socialist revolution. Petur Popov, *Ustanovjavane, razvitiie i sistema na proletarskata diktatura u nas*, Sofia; BAN, 1956, pp. 137-38. Cf. also Panaiot Gindev, *Kum vŭprosa za kharaktera na narodnodemokratičeskata revoliutsia v Bulgariia* (Sofia; BAN, 1956), pp. 34-35; A. Charukchiev, "Za kharaktera na narodnodemokratičeskata revoliutsia v Bulgariia," *Vŭprosi za razvitiieto na Bulgariia po putia na sotsializma* (Sofia, BAN, 1954).

Czechoslovakia nor in Bulgaria was the anti-Nazi struggle connected with a bourgeois-democratic revolution; therefore, the people's democratic revolution in those two countries did not need to go through a bourgeois-democratic stage.

According to Bystřina, the national-democratic revolution in Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria was a sort of transition to the socialist revolution, but was not a socialist revolution in itself. On the other hand, it was not a bourgeois-democratic revolution either, because it did not carry out the usual bourgeois-democratic tasks. Bystřina's view that the national-democratic revolution was the beginning of the socialist revolution is somewhat reminiscent of the original concept of people's democracy expounded by Dimitrov and interpreted by Farberov, Mankovskii, and others, who regarded the people's democratic revolution as a socialist revolution from its very beginning. However, Bystřina categorically denies this resemblance. He points out that the period from May, 1945, to February, 1948, was marked by profound transformations which, by their very nature, amounted to a socialist revolution. The national democratic revolution was the beginning of this process, having been concerned with a variety of tasks, some of which were exclusively nationalist, others had an explicit anti-capitalist character. Bystřina frankly admits that, behind the nationalist screen, all these measures served primarily the purposes of class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. Among these measures was the banning of various political parties, such as the Agrarian Party, and other parties of the Czechoslovak bourgeoisie. Bystřina emphasizes that the Košice Program of 1945, which on the surface was a program of national liberation, had a definite anti-capitalistic character.¹⁷ He is of course aware of the fact that the national democratic revolution in Czechoslovakia performed a number of actions which would belong in the sphere of a bourgeois-democratic revolution, but he regards them as of secondary importance, without any influence on the overall nature of the revolution.

According to Bystřina, the form of the state which was established in Czechoslovakia in the course of the national democratic revolution in May, 1945, was neither a joint dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry nor a democratic dictatorship of the people, but a genuine dictatorship of the proletariat, though still "incomplete and unsteady." He denies that the Czechoslovak government of 1945 was a parliamentary democracy of the bourgeois type, and asserts that it was already people's democracy whose policy was determined by the working class led by the Communist Party. However, because the representatives of the bourgeoisie still participated in the government, this dictatorship of the proletariat was not yet "complete," but became so in February, 1948.¹⁸

The Bulgarian communist theoreticians follow essentially the same line

17. Bystřina, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 212.

of thought, especially by asserting that the dictatorship of the proletariat in Bulgaria was formed as early as September 9, 1944. They concede that, at that time, the Bulgarian proletarian state was still unsteady and required a period of some three years to develop into a full dictatorship of the proletariat. They assert that there was no stage of transition from a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry to a dictatorship of the proletariat in Bulgaria, and call the entire development a "general consolidation" of the proletarian dictatorship.¹⁹

The Bulgarian communists also criticize Sobolev's thesis that a monarchy is always characteristic of a feudal system. Todor Pavlov points out that the monarchy in Bulgaria was a typical representative and leader of the bourgeoisie, and asserts that the abolition of monarchy in Bulgaria was not an expression of the bourgeois-democratic revolution against feudal institutions, but rather a result of an anti-bourgeois, socialist revolution. For that reason Pavlov sees in the disappearance of monarchy a great blow to the Bulgarian bourgeoisie.²⁰

In terms of Marxist ideology, the Czechoslovak and the Bulgarian theories represent a departure from the established pattern. For practical purposes, however, they have not changed anything in the nature of a proletarian state. Governments of Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria are still dictatorships, with an exclusive power monopoly of the communist party, even if this power monopoly is disguised under a coalition label. The Czechoslovak and Bulgarian varieties give their peoples no more share in the government than does the Soviet version of people's democracy, and they also leave the political and economic privileges of the party bureaucracy entirely intact. They do not represent any real corrective to official dogmatism. The intellectual exercises of the Czechoslovakian and Bulgarian communists are strongly reminiscent of various theological controversies of the Middle Ages. The fact that those in power tolerate and perhaps encourage such "metaphysical" discussions may perhaps be explained by the government's desire to keep the intellectuals harmlessly busy.

The Czechoslovak variety of people's democracy and its theoretical treatment in the writings of local communists deserves additional attention also because Czechoslovakia has become the first people's democratic state to reach the stage of full socialism. On July 11, 1960, the Czechoslovak National Assembly approved a new socialist constitution replacing the previous people's democratic constitution of 1948. The new state is called the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (ČSSR). According to the Preamble, "people's democracy as a path to socialism has been fully successful in Czechoslovakia, and led to the victory of socialism." With the promulgation of the new constitution, the stage of people's democracy has apparently ended, and

19. Gindev, *op. cit.*, p. 119-120.

20. Todor D. Pavlov, "K voprosu o kharaktere bolgarskoi narodnodemokrati-cheskoi revolutsii," *Voprosy filosofii*, No. 6 (1956), 45.

the country is passing over the construction of an advanced socialist society getting ready for the transition to communism.²¹

From the point of view of the Marxist-Leninist theory of the state, the new Czechoslovak Constitution contains some interesting features. Like in the Soviet Constitution, the Communist Party was given official constitutional status as the "vanguard of the working class" and the "leading force in society and the state." At the same time, however, the institution of the National Front was preserved. Art. 6 of the Constitution stipulates:

The National Front of the Czechs and Slovaks which unites the organizations of society is the political expression of the alliance of the toilers from town and country led by the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia.²²

This means that the plurality of political parties in Czechoslovakia was still in existence under full socialism. Though the term employed by Art. 6 "organizations of society," is too vague to be cited in support of the constitutional confirmation of the prolonged existence of the multiplicity of political parties, it is obvious that, at least for the time being, it included political parties. The political composition of the Czechoslovak National Assembly elected on June 12, 1960, was as follows:²³

<i>Political Party</i>	<i>Number of Seats</i>
Communist Party (Czech)	157
Communist Party (Slovak)	62
People's Party (Catholic)	16
Czech Socialist Party	15
Slovak Unity Party	4
Without party affiliation	44

A multiple party system under the Soviet brand of socialism is something which is hard to reconcile with the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism. It has always been held that the diversity of social interests is the very reason for the existence of political parties, and that, under socialism, there is room only for one party, the party of the proletariat. The explanation for this remarkable deviation from the strict orthodoxy prevailing in the Soviet orbit may be found in the propagandistic value of the multiple party system. It was apparently felt that a plurality of political parties and a coalition system of government make a better impression on the outside world than an orthodox one-party dictatorship. It is of course obvious that this plurality can be discarded any time the Communist Party chooses to do so. The wording of Art. 6 can be interpreted to mean that

21. Czechoslovakia. Constitution. *Ústava Československé socialistické republiky* (Praha: Obrana lidu, 1960), Preamble. The next country which reached the stage of full socialism was Rumania. Article 1 of the Constitution of August 21, 1965 declares that Rumania is a socialist state. Rumania. Constitution. "Constitutia Republicii socialiste Romania." *Buletinul oficial al Republicii socialiste Romania*, 1, Pt. 1 No. 1 (Aug. 21, 1965).

22. *Ibid.*, Art. 6.

23. *Bohemia* (July, 1960).

"society" or "social" are only those organizations which are compatible with a proletarian dictatorship, e.g., trade unions, youth, educational, sport and other similar associations. Nevertheless, a plurality of political parties in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic was preserved and, apparently, its value with respect to public opinion abroad exceeded all doctrinal considerations. The case of Czechoslovakia is especially remarkable in that it confirms in practice Sobolev's assertion that a dictatorship of the proletariat is feasible in the form of a "parliamentary republic."

The Czechoslovak development seems to provide an answer to the question of whether the term "people's democracy" can still be applied to countries which have already reached the stage of full socialism. The case of Czechoslovakia indicates that a country loses its status of "people's democracy" as soon as it is found eligible for the "higher" status of a "socialist country," by the Soviet leaders. Thus far the name "people's democracy" indicated the status of historical inequality on the part of the Soviet satellites in relation to the Soviet Union. If all people's democracies reach the stage of full socialism, there will be no visible mark of this historical inequality between the Soviet Union and the satellites. But perhaps the Soviet Union will have reached the stage of full communism by then and the status of historical inferiority on the part of the satellites will again be easily recognizable.

China's "New Democracy"

The traditional Marxist scheme leading to the establishment of a communist party dictatorship in the name of the proletariat appeared unsuitable for countries in which the industrial proletariat hardly existed. Instead of the proletariat, the revolution had to be carried out by some sort of an alliance between workers, peasants and capitalists. The revolution in China was directed both at overthrowing the existing political order, described as feudal or semi-feudal, and at the elimination of foreign influence.²⁴ Unlike the typical proletarian dictatorships, the Chinese variety was not supposed to abolish capitalism but merely to put it under a strict state control.

The concept of the "new democracy" was formulated by Mao Tse-tung in his work *On the New Democracy*, published in January, 1940. The essential features of Mao's theory may be summarized as follows: Foreign imperialist powers prevented the development of bourgeois democracy in China. Consequently, the Chinese pattern of the revolution differs from that in the West. The Chinese revolution consists of two phases, the democratic, and the socialist. The first revolutionary phase did not bring democracy in the established sense but rather a new type of democracy called by Mao "new

24. Cf. J. H. Brimmell, *A Short History of the Malayan Communist Party* (Singapore: D. Moore, 1956), p. 5.

democracy." The objective of the first phase was to turn the colonial, semi-colonial and semi-feudal society into an independent democratic society. In the second phase, the revolution, under its own impetus, continues and builds up a socialist society. It was held that, in view of its backwardness, China had to traverse a bourgeois-democratic stage on its way to socialism. With the emergence of the Soviet Union in 1917, however, the nature of the Chinese bourgeois-democratic revolution changed. From then on, the Chinese revolution became a part of the world proletarian socialist revolution, and was therefore combined with the proletarian revolution under the leadership of the proletariat instead of the bourgeoisie.²⁵

The government set up by this revolution takes the form of a dictatorship of all "anti-imperialist and anti-feudal" forces, *i.e.*, it is a multiparty government in which various parties represent different social classes, "the proletariat, the peasantry, the intelligentsia and other petty-bourgeois elements."

In Mao's theory, this form of the state not only differs from the bourgeois-capitalist democracies of the West, but it differs from the Soviet state as well. The former state form is a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, while the latter is a dictatorship of the proletariat. The Chinese state, however, is a joint dictatorship of several classes. Mao acknowledged that the Soviet form would be the final ideal form. He stressed, however, that

In a certain historical period, the Soviet-style republic cannot be fittingly put into practice in colonial and semi-colonial countries, the state form of which must be of a third form, namely, that of the new democratic republic.

Mao recognizes three forms of state: (1) republics of a bourgeois dictatorship; (2) republics of a proletarian dictatorship; and (3) republics of a joint dictatorship of several revolutionary classes. According to Mao, only the last form was the correct one for China. Mao asserted further that this form also was the only correct form for other colonies and semi-colonies.²⁶

The economy of the new democracy would be mixed, consisting of a peasant sector, a limited capitalist sector, a cooperative sector and a socialist sector.

The originality of Mao's theory is doubtful, especially with regard to his concept of the bourgeois-democratic nature of the Chinese revolution, the notion that the Chinese revolution is a part of the world proletarian revolution, and the concept of a state form which is neither bourgeois dictatorship nor a proletarian dictatorship. All these concepts appeared earlier in Soviet writings, especially the concept of the joint dictatorship of several revolutionary classes and the use of non-communists in the form of various alliances, united fronts, and coalitions.

25. Mao Tse-tung, "On the New Democracy," In Conrad Brandt, Benjamin Schwartz and John K. Fairbank, *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1952), pp. 264-65.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 267.

The true originality of Mao's contribution lies largely in the field of strategy. Mao, like many other communist theoreticians, used theory as a tool for an *ex-post facto* justification of expedient actions, by concealing facts, stressing certain parts of the theory and conveniently overlooking others. Instead of a really "scientific" approach to various problems, he stuck to old clichés which long ago were disproved by facts, *e.g.*, the so-called leadership of the peasantry by the urban proletariat.

The much advertised progress toward socialism through by-passing the capitalist stage cannot be regarded as a specific ally Chinese feature either. Communist writers prefer citing Mongolia as an example of this particular path to socialism, stressing the total absence of the working class in that country, and its artificial creation out of the petty bourgeois elements after the revolution. A Czech communist wrote for example:

Since Mongolia never entered the stage of capitalist development, it did not possess any working class whatsoever... The Mongolian working class came into existence only after the revolution. It was created from the petty bourgeois strata of the population which of course was burdened with numerous vestiges of the feudal dark ages. The Party took over the task of educating the young working class politically, in order to enable it to carry out the transition of the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolution. Mongolia thus had to traverse after the revolution a special stage of development in the course of which the working class was born.²⁷

At any rate, Mao's "new democracy" contained many elements which were also the chief characteristics of the people's democracies of the post World War II era. The military victory of the Chinese communists on the mainland in 1949-50 confronted Moscow with a problem of how to fit the Chinese new-democratic variety into the theory of people's democracy. The victory came precisely at a time when the Soviet Union rejected the uncomfortable notion of the separate paths to socialism; the Soviet leaders were not too eager to accept the Chinese path as a standard pattern for the "colonial and semi-colonial" countries as Mao Tse-tung had suggested. The best solution appeared to be to include China in the category of the people's democracies. It was thus asserted that China, too, must pass through a period of a "bitter class struggle against its temporary allies"²⁸ in order to transform the bourgeois-democratic stage of its revolution into a socialist phase. The diversity of the Chinese path was conceded merely in the degree of the development:

27. E. Hršel, "Vítězná cesta mongolského lidu k socialismu" *Nová mysl*, No. 7 (červenec, 1959), p. 714.

28. A. A. Martynov at the Conference on the Nature and Specific Features of People's Democracy in the Countries of the East in *Akademiia nauk SSSR; Institut Vostokovedeniia*, "O kharaktere i osobennostiakh narodnoi demokrati v stranakh vostoka; khronika v otdelenii istorii i filosofii," *Izvestiia Akademii nauk SSSR*, No. 1, Vol. IX (1952). A German translation in *Sowjetische Beiträge zur Staats- und Rechtstheorie* (Berlin: Verlag Kultur und Fortschritt, 1953), p. 308.

The fundamental difference between the people's democracies of Europe and those of the East lies in the fact that in China, Mongolia, Korea and Viet-Nam people's democracy carries out at present the tasks of a national liberation as well as the anti-feudal tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution; for the time being, it does not face the problem of building socialism, and therefore it does not perform the functions of a proletarian dictatorship.²⁹

It was further asserted that the Chinese path to socialism had certain features which are common to all people's democracies, such as a non-violent transition into a socialist revolution resulting from the dominant role of the proletariat in the Chinese multi-class coalition. According to G. B. Ehrenburg,

the proletariat who holds the decisive power in the first, anti-imperialist, and anti-feudal phase of the revolution will not have to resort to a forcible seizure of power during the process of transition to the second phase of the revolution. The transition will be a slow and gradual process through a number of intermediary stages of the socialist revolution. In the course of this transition, it will not be necessary to overthrow by force the present government; on the contrary, this transition will be performed under the very influence of the present government. The policy of the government will undergo a change, and so will its program and the nature of the government. The change will not appear so much in the composition of the government, certainly not merely in the fact that some parties, groups, individuals, etc., will fall off; it will find its expression rather in the transformation of the government program, in the change of its policy because the proletariat will begin to carry out its program proper.³⁰

The Soviet scholars conceded that though the specific circumstances in China favor a direct transition to socialism through by-passing the capitalist stage, it did not mean that there would be no capitalism in China. A. N. Khaifets pointed out that the concept of a non-capitalist development should be interpreted in the sense that it denotes merely the secondary importance of the capitalist socio-economic forms, but definitely not its complete absence.³¹

Mao Tse-tung's implicit claim that the Chinese path may serve as an example for the strategy of other Asian communist parties was expressly rejected by E. M. Zhukov who pointed out that other Asian countries who have embarked on the road of people's democracy could not count on a revolutionary army which had been the most important asset of the Chinese revolution.³²

Moscow, in its classification of communist China as people's democracy, refrained from stressing the requirement of conformity too far, perhaps in view of the experience with Yugoslavia. In fact, it can be assumed that the Soviet insistence on including China in the category of the people's democ-

29. E. M. Zhukov, *Ibid.*, p. 297.

30. *Ibid.*, pp. 307-308.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 307.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 298.

racies has been designed primarily as an ideological restraint on the Chinese communists.³³ The Russians admitted that the Chinese people's government was a multi-class coalition; it was emphasized, however, that this coalition was merely a "specific form of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry," which was joined by other social groups for the purpose of carrying out various anti-imperialist and anti-feudal tasks.³⁴ Since it was shown earlier that this form of alliance between the proletariat and peasantry must always stand under the "hegemony" of the proletariat, it is obvious that, in China too, the proletariat, i.e., the communist party, was the only coalition member which possessed real political power.

The Chinese response to the Soviet classification of "new democracy" as people's democracy was expressed in Mao's address delivered on July 1, 1949, in which Mao Tse-tung apparently accepted the term "people's democracy" as an equivalent to his own "new democracy." Nevertheless, he regarded his "people's democratic dictatorship" still as something different from the dictatorship of the proletariat, namely, as a dictatorship of the "whole people," consisting of four "progressive" classes, the proletariat, the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie. Mao stressed further that classes other than the proletariat were to be educated into socialism through "democratic methods," i.e., through persuasion, not coercion.³⁵ The inclusion of the national bourgeoisie among the progressive classes of the people was one of the Chinese peculiarities which the theoreticians explained by the cooperative attitude of this class in the past³⁶ as contrasted to the hostility and anti-revolutionary character of the Russian bourgeoisie. It was stressed that the Chinese national bourgeoisie (called sometimes also middle bourgeoisie) was a "weak and vacillating force," and had its disagreements with the working class, but at the same time also had disagreements with imperialism, feudalism, and the big bourgeoisie. The common interest made it possible for the bourgeoisie to join the cause of the revolution.³⁷

The emphasis on the notion of ideological remolding and education of the bourgeoisie into accepting socialism appeared to some students of Chinese communism as an implicit rejection of the Marxist-Leninist tenet of a bitter class struggle during the period of transition to socialism. The

33. Cf. Benjamin Schwartz, "China and the Soviet Theory of People's Democracy," *Problems of Communism*, III, No. 5 (September-October, 1954), p. 13.

34. Zhukov, *op. cit.*, p. 298.

35. Mao Tse-tung, "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship," in Brandt, Schwartz and Fairbank, *op. cit.*, p. 456-457.

36. See Liu Shao-ch'i, *Internationalism and Nationalism* (3d ed.; Peking: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952), p. 35.

37. Hu Chiao-mu, *Thirty Years of the Communist Party of China: an Outline History* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1957), p. 91.

concept of the class struggle, however, was not abandoned by the Chinese theoreticians. Liu Shao-ch'i stressed that the "class struggle would go on until socialist transformation is completed," and continued:

Even after that, there will still be struggles between socialist and capitalist stands, viewpoints and methods over a long period of time. Our principal ways of conducting such struggles are education and persuasion. It is only for the few individuals who adopt a hostile attitude toward socialism and violate laws of the state that necessary compulsory methods of reform are adopted in accordance with the circumstances in each case.³²

The transformation of individuals into full members of socialist society by "rectification" is reserved exclusively for the "people." The others, that is, the "reactionaries," cannot be educated into accepting socialism by persuasion. For them coercion remains the only suitable method. The Party, of course, is the sole judge in deciding who belongs in the category of the people and who is a reactionary.³⁹ According to Mao, the essence of the "people's" democratic dictatorship lies in its dual nature: it is a "democracy among the people" and "dictatorship over the reactionaries."⁴⁰

The absence of the notion of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the substitution of the democratic dictatorship of the people instead have been regarded as the principal characteristics of the Chinese concept of socialist state. However, this special feature of Chinese people's democracy did not last long. In the Political Report of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party of September 15, 1956, Liu Shao-ch'i declared China's form of government as equivalent to the dictatorship of the proletariat, regardless of the multi-class and multi-party character of the people's democratic dictatorship. This change of the people's democratic dictatorship into the dictatorship of the proletariat was performed by the usual sleight-of-hand by substituting the Party for the proletariat. In Liu's words,

the working class has won ruling power throughout the country in conditions of a firm alliance with several hundred millions of peasants; the party of the working class—the Chinese Communist Party—has become the party that

38. Chung-kuo kung ch'an tang, *The Political Report of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China to the Eighth National Congress of the Party*, delivered on September 15, 1956 (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1956), p. 63.

39. There were numerous discussions among the Chinese intellectuals concerning the problem whether a person of a bourgeois origin can ever transform himself into a worker. Some of these controversies have reached the point of ridicule. *The Economist* described such a debate about whether or not the transformation of a capitalist to a member of the proletarian class involved "discarding the flesh and changing the skeleton." Another writer called the spiritual process which the member of the capitalist class is required to make in order to become a proletarian the "ripening of melons" and insisted that the melons should not be picked unripe, that is, that the capitalists should undergo a full remolding before being admitted among the proletarians. See: "The Ripening Melons of Peking," *The Economist* (August 9, 1958), p. 46946.

40. Mao Tse-tung, *op. cit.*, In Brandt, Schwartz and Fairbank, *op. cit.*, p. 456.

leads the state power of the whole country; therefore, the people's democratic dictatorship has in essence become one form of dictatorship of the proletariat.⁴¹

While the Chinese communists originally agreed to an inclusion of their "new democracy" into the general category of people's democracy in 1949, they could not accept the subsequent concept of "parliamentary roads" to socialism. Even less palatable must have appeared to the Chinese the Soviet tendency toward a rehabilitation of the bourgeoisie in the strategy for an eventual peaceful assumption of power by the communists in the underdeveloped countries, or various domestic deviations, such as Togliatti's theory of structural reform.

A peaceful transition to socialism is for the Chinese fundamentalists a mere subsidiary notion, one which cannot be a priori rejected but which is not very likely either. They agree that the communists should be equally well versed in all methods of conquest, but point out that "there is no historical precedent for peaceful transition from capitalism to socialism."⁴² Parliamentary means of struggle are said to have equal validity with other methods if they promise success, but are by no means the sole or the main form of the political struggle.⁴³ The Chinese communists insist that the victory of socialism is contingent on the destruction of the state apparatus of the bourgeois regime.

The Chinese warn that a mere electoral victory of a socialist party cannot guarantee a success of socialism, and point out that there were many past instances of such an electoral victory in the West, yet nowhere did they result in the establishment of socialism, *e.g.*, in France, Italy and Great Britain.⁴⁴ Since a bourgeois state never collapses "unless it is pushed," a transition from capitalism to socialism is possible, in the Chinese view, only if the proletarian party proceeds through the class struggle and revolution, and bases its action on the Marxist-Leninist teaching of the revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.⁴⁵

The Chinese communists also are much more cautious in their evaluation of the role of the bourgeoisie in the struggle for national liberation in the colonial countries. They recognize the positive value of the national bour-

41. Chung-kuo kung ch'an tang, *op. cit.*, p. 9. Cf. also Jen min jih pao, *On the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat* (Peking: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1956), p. 17.

42. Chung-kuo kung ch'an tang, "A Proposal [of June 14, 1963] concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement: the Letter of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in Reply to the Letter of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union of March 30, 1963," *Peking Review*, vi, 25 (June 21, 1963), p. 11.

43. "More on the Differences between Comrade Togliatti and Us; Some Important Problems of Leninism in the Contemporary World," by the Editorial Department of Hongqi. *Peking Review*, vi, No. 10-11 (Mar. 15, 1963), p. 36.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 36-37.

45. Chung-kuo kung ch'an tang, "A Proposal...", p. 11.

geoisie in the fight against imperialist powers as long as it is "patriotic," and are willing to join forces with the national bourgeoisie as long as it tends to be "progressive, anti-imperialist and anti-feudal," but they distrust its "reactionary tendencies to compromise and collaborate with imperialism and the forces of feudalism." In the Chinese concept, the role of the bourgeoisie is entirely subordinated to a "worker-peasant alliance," and the communist party remains the undisputed leader in the struggle for national liberation.⁴⁶

It is interesting to note that the Chinese communists still see people's democracy as a proper form of the transition toward socialism. They insist that only a proletarian revolution and a dictatorship of the proletariat can accomplish such transition, and that the national democratic revolution in the underdeveloped countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America is a mere component part of the contemporary proletarian world revolution. While the Chinese communists recognize the possibility of using "parliamentary and other legal forms of struggle," they definitely reject the notion of "legalism and parliamentary cretinism" under which struggle would be confined "within the limits permitted by the bourgeoisie."⁴⁷

The concept of a parliamentary road to socialism, which implies a non-violent, peaceful transition, has always been repugnant to the Chinese communists. A notion that the working class in the capitalist countries can use the existing government to its own ends, without smashing the bourgeois state apparatus, and limit its task to winning decisive political influence necessary for the establishment of socialism in a gradual way, was condemned as "Titoism."⁴⁸ Despite its opposition to such reformist notions,

46. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

48. See, for example: Chen Po-ta "Yugoslav Revisionism—Product of Imperialist Policy," Hongqi, (June 1, 1958). A translation of this article in the work: *In Refutation of Modern Revisionism* (Peking: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1958), pp. 33-49. For the passage referred to, see p. 41.

The vehement Chinese attack on the Yugoslav communists in the summer of 1958 is regarded by *Survey* as the beginning of the Sino-Soviet conflict. According to the Russians, the conflict dates from the publication, in Peking, of a collection of articles entitled, "Long Live Leninism," in April 1960, while the Chinese trace the beginning to the publication, in *Pravda*, of a Tass statement criticising the Chinese (September 10, 1959). "East Wind-West Wind," *Survey*, No. 49 (Oct. 1963), p. 3. Some students of the Sino-Soviet relations place the beginning of the conflict even further back. Referring to the Chinese letter of September 10, 1960, addressed to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Edward Crankshaw notes that the letter opened with a statement that the conflict of views was not recent but went back to the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU in 1956. The Chinese complained in the letter that the CPSU then wrongfully ignored Stalin's positive role, failed to discuss the matter with other communist parties, and also put forward the "false theory" of peaceful transition. Edward Crankshaw, *The New Cold War: Moscow v. Peking* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1963), p. 113.

the Chinese Communist Party was represented at the meeting in Moscow, November-December 1960, where the concept of a non-violent transition to socialism for the developing countries was adopted in the form of "national democracy." Moreover, the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party approved the Moscow Declaration of 1960, although it made no comment on this new form of transition.⁴⁹

With the growing intensity of the Sino-Soviet ideological conflict, the Chinese opposition to the concept of a non-revolutionary road toward socialism became both more vocal and more articulate. The criticism of the reformist tendencies was originally directed against theories expounded by some Italian communists, who held that socialism can be attained through various devices of bourgeois democracy, *e.g.*, the parliamentary system and party pluralism. Among the statements particularly condemned by the Chinese communists was the communiqué of the Communist Party of Italy issued upon the occasion of the Twenty Second Congress of the CPSU in November 1961:

Owing to its institutions, contents, and objectives, socialist democracy is profoundly different from bourgeois democracy, not simply from the viewpoint of its historical development in the Soviet Union and in other socialist countries, but also from the viewpoint of its future possible development in other countries, *even though it may follow patterns and forms which today are typical of bourgeois democracy, such as the parliamentary system, party pluralism, the existence of a majority and a minority...*⁵⁰

The essence of Togliatti's "theory of structural reform," formulated in some detail in the theses of the Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of Italy,⁵¹ is the possibility of attaining socialism (*i.e.*, Marxist-Leninist kind of socialism) within the framework of parliamentary democracy, without smashing the existing state machine, and without the necessity of establishing a dictatorship of the proletariat. The Chinese communists rejected Togliatti's plan of promoting socialism by means of a "new democratic regime" which, was supposed to be created under the existing Italian Constitution in the form of a "new bloc of social and political forces," and insisted that such a conception repudiated not only the experience of the Paris Commune but of the October Revolution and the people's democratic revolutions as well. They strictly adhered to Lenin's theory of state and revolution where the destruction of the existing bourgeois state apparatus and the establishment

49. Chung-kuo ch'an tang. "Chinese Communist Party Resolution on the Moscow Meeting." *Peking Review*, IV, No. 4 (Jan. 27, 1961), pp. 7-9.

50. Italian Communist Party communiqué on the XXII CPSU Congress, *L'Unità*, Nov. 28, 1961, quoted in *Diversity in International Communism; a Documentary Record, 1961-1963*, edited by Alexander Dallin, with Jonathan Harris and Grey Hodnett for the Research Institute on Communist Affairs, Columbia University (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), p. 460. (Emphasis added.)

51. See *L'Unità*, Supplement, September 13, 1962.

of the dictatorship of the proletariat was a *sine qua non* for the attainment of socialism.⁵²

While the Chinese communists do not exclude parliamentary or legal forms of struggle for power, they hold that, in the "imperialist and capitalist countries, the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat are essential for the thorough resolution of the contradictions of capitalist society."⁵³ They admit that a cooperation with the bourgeoisie in the fight against imperialist powers is useful, but assert that such cooperation is merely a temporary expedient. They insist that the communist party must not subordinate its interests and policies to those of the bourgeoisie, but "must put forward a program of its own which is thoroughly against imperialism and domestic reaction and for national independence and people's democracy, and it must work independently among the masses, constantly expand the progressive forces, win over the middle forces and isolate the reactionary forces; only thus can it carry the national democratic revolution through to the end and guide the revolution on to the road of socialism."⁵⁴

The reference to "people's democracy" in this statement does not appear to be purely accidental. In the Chinese vocabulary, people's democracy is still the very instrument of the revolution. In an article published in *Hoc Tap*, a theoretical organ of the Workers' Party of Viet-Nam, which, significantly, was fully reprinted in the *Peking Review*, people's democracy is referred to as a chosen instrument of the revolution:

Because we have the machinery of violence in the form of the people's democratic state, led by the working class, we have been able to carry out the peaceful transformation of the bourgeoisie and the rich peasants and effect a peaceful transition to socialism.

According to this article, the revolutionary violence did not necessarily mean actual fighting, but essentially the "administrative measures promulgated by the people's democratic state..."⁵⁵

The Chinese communists also qualify the meaning of "peaceful co-

52. "More on the Differences between Comrade Togliatti and Us; Some Important Problems of Leninism in the Contemporary World," by the Editorial Department of Hongqi. *Peking Review*, VI, Nos. 10-11 (Mar. 15, 1963), p. 42. Apparently there is a group within the Chinese Communist Party which advocates a non-violent transition to socialism. This group was recently attacked as reactionary "in its most concentrated form." It was reasserted "that the Chinese revolution must be led by the proletariat, that it must pass from the stage of the new democratic revolution to the stage of the socialist revolution, that the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat must be carried through to the end and that its ultimate goal is communism." "Along the Socialist or the Capitalist Road?" by the Editorial Department of Hongqi and Renmin Ribao. *Peking Review*, X, No. 34 (Aug. 18, 1967), p. 10.

53. Chung-kuo kung ch'an tang. "A Proposal...", p. 11.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 10-11.

55. "Peace or Violence," *Peking Review*, VI, 12 (Oct. 18, 1963), p. 24.

existence" which they regard as inapplicable to the notion of the people's revolution. They define "peaceful coexistence" as "a relationship between countries with different social systems, between independent states," and insist that it cannot be applied to the relations "between oppressed and oppressor classes and between oppressed and oppressor nations." They emphasize that a peaceful coexistence is possible only after a final victory of the revolution.⁵⁶

By insisting on the necessity of the revolutionary road to socialism, the Chinese apparently hope that their message can be put across to the developing nations where the "parliamentary approach," and the strategy of partial demands have hardly any meaning for the restless, militant, communist parties.

Apart from the unfinished experiment of reaching socialism by a short-cut through "people's communes," the Chinese variety of people's democracy differs from the Soviet Union and the people's democracies in the multi-class structure of its government, as contrasted to both the exclusive class dictatorship of the proletariat and the joint dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. As noted, the multi-party pattern of the Chinese people's democratic dictatorship does not mean a genuine coalition. Nevertheless, the political formula of the multi-class structure of the Chinese government is not altogether without significance. It had its meaning both internally and externally.

- (1) It meant that in China the capitalist sector was not fully liquidated, but that it was deliberately preserved in part.
- (2) The four-class structure was designed to win the support of the Chinese intelligentsia.
- (3) The multi-class approach was intended to make the communist revolution more attractive to other countries and to win the support of all non-communist progressive elements for the revolutionary cause.⁵⁷

The Chinese variant of people's democracy, despite its multi-class structure, is no more democratic than its Soviet and East-European counter-

56. "Peaceful Coexistence—Two Diametrically Opposed Policies: Comment on the Open Letter of the Central Committee of the CPSU," by the Editorial Departments of "Renmin Ribao" and "Hongqi," *Peking Review*, VI, 51 (Dec. 20, 1963), p. 13.

57. It has always been apparent that the artificial separation of the Chinese people into four classes of the coalition called the "people," as opposed to the class of the "reactionaries," was merely a device for the liquidation of certain categories of citizens. The Chinese communists later changed the entire character of the multi-class coalition. It was asserted that, instead of representing the Chinese bourgeoisie, (plus other classes), the united front was expected to liquidate the bourgeoisie by remolding it ideologically into a segment of the proletariat. Since the lesser parties of China adopted a resolution on March 16, 1958, calling for their "socialist remolding," the Chinese united front as a propaganda device has been stripped of its usefulness and power to deceive. (Harold G. Hinton, "The Democratic Parties; End of an Experiment," *Problems of Communism*, VII, No. 3 (May-June, 1958), p. 46.)

parts. On the contrary, the Chinese people's democracy has proved to be a more totalitarian and intransigent brand of communism than the present Soviet version. Mao's fanaticism keeps the Chinese revolution in a full swing. The recent shake-up of the state and Party bureaucracy is said to be based on a cherished Marxist-Leninist model, the Paris Commune of 1871. In every community taken over by Mao's "revolutionary rebels" were set provisional committees. Later on, the communes are to be established throughout the country following the elections which will be held "in accordance with the principles of the Paris Commune." The Paris Commune of 1871 is to serve as a model to reestablish Mao's power. According to *Red Flag*, the Paris Commune was too moderate in the use of its authority, and the rebels are expected to remedy its short-comings. They are being told to destroy the state machine completely because it has become an "instrument of bourgeois dictatorship."⁵⁸

Yugoslavia's Counterpart of People's Democracy: Socialist Democracy

It is an irony of fate that Yugoslavia, once a model pupil of communism, has become the first communist country to be involved in a serious ideological quarrel with its former teacher and master. It is even more ironic that, as a result of this ideological rift, Yugoslavia is the first and thus far the only communist country to develop its own brand of socialism and to formulate its own theory of the socialist state distinct from that expounded by the Soviet and satellite communists. Yugoslavia's socialist democracy is in fact the only genuine people's democracy, if by that is understood a system of government whose essential function is to provide political framework for the transformation of the countries of Eastern Europe from a system of relatively free enterprise to one of Marxist-Leninist socialism, independently of the Soviet Union and without Soviet methods. Assuredly, the political formula of socialist democracy still is largely a convenient camouflage of total state control, yet in comparison with the Soviet system, the Yugoslav regime of socialist democracy seems to contain certain authentic democratic elements as a result of the combination of industrial democracy with a functional representation.

As pointed out in the introductory chapter, certain students of European communism maintain that the very concept of people's democracy originated in Yugoslavia and was designed to describe a system representing not a mere formal but a real democracy.

The Yugoslav notion of socialism and the different concept of the proletarian state is largely a by-product of the controversy between Stalin and Tito. Though the friction between the two leaders dates back to the war years, the decisive break did not come until 1948. While the ideological

58. "Mao's Paris Commune," *The Economist*, Feb. 11, 1967, p. 492.

differences between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia were not totally absent, the controversy was primarily a "conflict between aspirations to national independence or self-determination and a supra-national imperial and ideological order based on the indisputable authoritarian leadership of an older brother,"⁵⁹ rather than a strictly doctrinal dispute.

At the same time, the political and economic isolation of Yugoslavia, resulting from its quarrel with the Soviet Union, made some measure of rapprochement with the West imperative, preferably by a showing of a certain degree of "democratization" of the Yugoslav political system and its differentiation from Soviet communism.⁶⁰ This was effected by reducing the degree of rigid centralization and bureaucratization and by a stronger emphasis on the national paths to socialism. Compared with the Stalinist excesses, the Yugoslav regime indeed appeared less ruthless, although it still remained authoritarian and totalitarian.

Workers' self-management, introduced in Yugoslavia on June 26, 1950, has initiated the long and complex process of formulating Yugoslavia's own form of Marxism which culminated in the *Program of the League of the Communists of Yugoslavia*, adopted in 1958,⁶¹ and found its legal expression in the new Constitution of April 7, 1963.⁶²

The Yugoslav variant of people's democracy, the so-called socialist democracy, is offered as Yugoslavia's own political form of social organization in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism. The Yugoslavs claim that theirs is a democracy for all, not just for a select class, even though the working class is its dominant element, primarily responsible for carrying out the transition to socialism. In a socialist democracy of the Yugoslav type, the working class is regarded as a chosen instrument for saving men from the evils of private property, state capitalism and other alienations which hinder man's progress and his full development in society.⁶³ Socialist democracy is still a dictatorship of the proletariat, defined as

59. Hans Kohn in the Introduction to Robert Bass, *The Soviet-Yugoslav Controversy 1948-58, A Documentary Record*, edited by Robert Bass and Elizabeth Marbury (New York: Prospect Books, 1959), p. xii.

60. Branko Lazić, *Tito et la révolution yougoslave* (Paris: Fasquelle edituers, 1957), p. 228.

61. Savez Komunista Jugoslavije, *Yugoslavia's Way. The Program of the League of the Communists of Yugoslavia*, transl. by Stoyan Pribechevich (New York: All Nations Press, 1958).

62. An English translation of the new Constitution of 1963 was published by the Secretariat for Information of the Federal Executive Council of Yugoslavia under the title: *The Constitution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia* (Beograd, 1963). For an analysis, from the legal point of view, of the socialist character of the Constitution and some of its most remarkable particularities, see Branko M. Pešelj, "Socialist Law and the New Yugoslav Constitution," *Georgetown Law Journal*, 51, No. 4 (Summer 1963), pp. 651-705.

63. Jovan Djordjević, *Državno uređenje Federativne narodne republiki Jugoslavije* (Beograd: Savez udruženja pravnika Jugoslavije, 1954), pp. 5-6.

"government by the specific alliance of the working class, as the leading social force, with other working people."⁶⁴ In their interpretation of the concept of the proletarian dictatorship, however, the Yugoslav communists seem to have come closer to Kautsky's point of view, because they see the dictatorship of the proletariat not as an external form of state or method of organization of the political system during the transition to socialism, (and later to communism), but rather as "its social or class-political substance."⁶⁵ The Yugoslavs insist that this is what Marx really intended. In this interpretation, the dictatorship of the proletariat may mean not only a revolutionary dictatorship, but also a mere decisive control within a parliamentary regime. Whether the proletarian dictatorship takes one form or another, depends on the actual situation:

In a country where the working class is becoming the leading social factor by a gradual conquest and consolidation of positions in the system of government, the dictatorship of the proletariat cannot take the same form it takes in some other country where, because of extreme internal antagonisms, the proletariat has won power through revolutionary overthrow of government, an overthrow which, like a tornado, has annihilated down to its foundations the hated old political system and introduced a regime of undisguised revolutionary dictatorship and power monopoly of the leading revolutionary forces.⁶⁶

The *Program* cautioned that this concept of the transitional state should not be understood to mean that the mere presence of a labor party in the government is sufficient, because a dictatorship of the proletariat can be only such political system "where the undisputed leading role belongs to the working class."⁶⁷ The essential criterion is whether or not the interests of the working class are the guiding principle of a given system:

In this sense, the dictatorship of the proletariat is any political system of the transition period where the immediate and future economic and other interests of the working class—that is, producers with social means of production—are the guiding principle of its entire political, economic and social activity.⁶⁸

From this point of view, the Yugoslavs recognize the gains made by labor movements within the capitalist system as genuine and significant. The dictatorship of the proletariat can thus take a variety of forms within a whole gamut of possibilities from a revolutionary dictatorship to parliamentary democracy, provided that the position of the working class in a given government is strong enough to change social relations in conformity with their social-economic interests. Moreover, the Yugoslav communists also anticipate the emergence of mixed governments with "various transitional governmental features of dual rule and compromise."⁶⁹

64. Savez Komunista Jugoslavije, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

65. *Ibid.*, p. 111.

66. *Ibid.*, p. 111.

67. *Ibid.*, p. 111.

68. *Ibid.*, pp. 112-113.

69. *Ibid.*, p. 114.

The new Constitution of 1963 sanctions the Yugoslav attempt to find a proper form of social relations. Edvard Kardelj stressed that the Constitution "avoids all dogmatism and doctrinalism in the formulation of social relations."⁷⁰ The empirical approach to the problem of socialism is apparent from the following statement:

The Constitution...leaves it to practice to find the forms of socialist and democratic relations which will harmonize with the development of the material basis of our society, that is, with the opportunities created by the growing material progress of our society. Practice is the ultimate arbiter of all disputes and of all subjective decisions. *Distinct socialist and democratic orientation, on the basis of the experience of the working masses and scientific knowledge, the interests of the material development of the community, and moral and political criteria: these, and not dogmas, are the leading principles for practice.*⁷¹

It is interesting to note that the Yugoslav pragmatism is almost identical with the position taken by Sobolev to the effect that a dictatorship of the proletariat can also be established in the form of a parliamentary democracy. Both approaches necessarily invite a somewhat paradoxical idea of a relaxed dictatorship in which a peaceful concession of power and means of production by the capitalists and landlords is possible. Like Sobolev, the authors of the *Program of the League of the Communists of Yugoslavia* were accordingly rebuked by Moscow. While it was admitted that the emergence of the world socialist system, the existence of the USSR and the growth of the communist parties and of the "national liberation movements" all over the world have provided "more favorable conditions for a veritably peaceful, painless transition to socialism," the Yugoslavs were warned that the danger was by no means over in view of the possibility of "increased resistance by hostile elements and an aggravation of the class struggle during the transition to socialism."⁷²

One of the most emphatically defended theses of the Yugoslav socialist democracy is the insistence on the eventual withering away of the proletarian state. It is also the most vulnerable point of the Yugoslav theory of the state, because it is its most utopian tenet. The problem of the withering away of the state has been always a source of considerable difficulty for the communist leaders, and the Yugoslavs do not seem to be doing any better.

According to the Yugoslav theory of the state, the dictatorship of the proletariat must not become self-perpetuating, however necessary the proletarian state may appear during the initial stage. The Yugoslav attacks against the so called "pragmatist revision" of Marxism are directed primarily against the abandonment of the basic tenet of Marxism that the proletarian state is a mere temporary phenomenon. The Yugoslav communists point

70. Edvard Kardelj, "Report on the Constitution of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia," In *The Constitutional System of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia* (Beograd, Review of International Affairs, 1963), p. 24.

71. *Ibid.*, p. 24 (Italics in the original)

72. P. Fedoseev, I. Pomelov and V. Cheprakov, "O proekte programmy Soiizuza Kommunistov Yugoslavii," *Kommunist*, xxxv, No. 6 (1958), p. 27.

out that the Marxist-Leninist theory was transformed into "Stalin's theory of the state which is not withering away and which has to grow ever stronger in all areas of social life."⁷³ Tito admitted that the abolition of the state in the Soviet Union had to be a protracted process because the Soviet Union inherited one of the most backward industrial countries, and therefore, had to create the material conditions for socialism, which in highly developed capitalist countries already exist.⁷⁴ He insisted, however, that the state cannot keep all functions, including the economy, in its hands until it reaches that high degree of industrialization and creates all the necessary material and other conditions for socialism. The Yugoslavs maintain that the extension of the role of the state and its continuing existence must sooner or later begin to obstruct the development of socialist factors in society and economy.⁷⁵ Therefore, the Yugoslav communists assert, the socialist state must be a state of a special type which would gradually develop into an apparatus of experts subordinated to elected self-governing bodies. It should become less an instrument of coercion and more an instrument of "social self-management." The Yugoslavs claim that such process has already begun in their country where "the role of state administration begins to diminish in the direct management of economy, in cultural and educational activities, health service, social security, and so on," and where management of these activities is being transferred to various "self-managing bodies, independent or interlinked in respective democratic organizations."⁷⁶ In other fields, such as in the area of the political system, matters of general and special regulation in economy, maintenance of public order, national defense, the judiciary, etc., the state functions are expected to remain.⁷⁷ Nevertheless, they, too, are supposed to change gradually in accordance with the increasing degree of social homogeneity.⁷⁸

The Yugoslavs are of course concentrating on activities where coercion appears as less essential. Though their approach may bring about a certain amount of further decentralization, the Yugoslav state is still far from the ideal of classless society wherein all antagonisms are supposed to disappear. The Soviet critics of Yugoslav revisionism point out that thus far there have been no indications that the Yugoslav state is withering away, despite the transfer of some governmental functions to self-governing bodies. They also assert that the entire Yugoslav concept of the withering away of the state is wrongly conceived, that the Yugoslavs have completely omitted

73. Savez Komunista Jugoslavije, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

74. Josip Broz Tito, *Workers Manage Factories in Yugoslavia* (Belgrade: 1950), p. 25.

75. Savez Komunista Jugoslavije, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

76. *Ibid.*, p. 116.

77. *Ibid.*, p. 117. Cf. Edvard Kardelj, Exposé at People's Assembly, In Yugoslavia, Constitution, *Fundamental Law Pertaining to the Bases of the Social and Political Organization of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia and of the Federal Organs of State Authority*. (Beograd: Union of Jurists' Associations of Yugoslavia, 1953), p. 19.

78. Savez Komunista Jugoslavije, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

to consider the coercive functions of the state which, in fact, are the only ones that matter, and which are really transitory, and that the Yugoslav theory of the disappearance of the state is largely concerned only with the economic-organizational functions of the socialist state. They brand the Yugoslav experiment as anarcho-syndicalism, in which the weakening of the economic role of the state and strong anarcho-syndicalist tendencies were substituted for a genuine withering away of the state.⁷⁹ In defense of the Yugoslav standpoint, it should be pointed out that the Soviet proposals for the gradual withering away of the state are not much more ingenious. The Soviet theorists also are concerned primarily with the non-coercive functions of the state when they speak about the transfer of various activities to nongovernmental associations, *e.g.*, the Komsomol, the trade unions, sport, or educational and cultural groups.⁸⁰ In the Soviet proposals, the main emphasis is, of course, on the increased participation of the rank and file in the administration, but the Yugoslavs do so also with their concept of political self-government.

The Yugoslav insistence that the economic functions of the state are the first to disappear is somewhat counter to the Soviet thesis. Ever since Lenin's times, the administration of economic affairs by the state has been regarded as of prime importance. Some Soviet theorists have even asserted that state management of economic affairs would remain after communism has been established. A. N. Kuznetsov, in his article on the economic functions of the Soviet state, put forth the following question: Is it true that under communism there will be no necessity for the organizing function of the government, is it true that this function will be retained only under the conditions of survival of the capitalist surroundings? Kuznetsov replied that the organizing functions of the government in economic affairs would remain even after the disappearance of the capitalist encirclement. He explained that this did not mean that the state as such would survive, but that those organs of the state which discharge economic functions would become agencies of communist management or, in other words, that under communism, the state would wither away while public authority in the economic field would continue.⁸¹ It is certainly difficult to imagine how the state can wither away in its political and legal aspects while it continues to exist in the economic field. It is clear, however, that the Russians consider it unthinkable that the state could renounce its functions in the ad-

79. G. Glezerman and B. Ukraintsev, "Der Sozialismus und der Staat," *Probleme des Friedens und des Sozialismus*, Nr. 1 (Berlin: 1958). Abbreviated text in *Ostprobleme*, x, Nr. 25/26 (19. Dezember, 1958), p. 831.

80. See, for example, F. Burlatskii, "Razvitie sotsialisticheskoi demokratii na sovremennom etape kommunisticheskogo stroitelstva," *Kommunist*, xxxv, No. 13 (Sept. 1958), pp. 32-33.

81. A. N. Kuznetsov, "Ob ekonomicheskoi roli sovetskogo gosudarstva," *Voprosy filosofii*, No. 4 (1951), p. 60.

ministration of economic affairs even under communism, to say nothing of the less perfect stage of socialism.

Similarly, the Chinese communists also stress the importance of the socialist state in economic matters, which they find necessary in order:

- (1) To wage the struggle between the two roads to secure the triumph of the socialist road over the capitalist road;
- (2) To carry out the class line and the class policies of the proletariat in all economic work; and,
- (3) Taking the interests of the whole country and all the people into consideration, to ensure the planned, proportionate development of the socialist national economy in accordance with the objective laws of socialist economic development.⁸²

The Soviet critics of the Yugoslav thesis further point out that the state cannot wither away while it is necessary for defense, for controls over production and labor, and for the preservation of national sovereignty. They conclude that the withering away of the state is a matter of the complete disappearance of classes, and of a further rapprochement and merger of nations. They warn that the alteration and disappearance of individual functions of the state must not be confused with the withering away of the state as a definitive social and political phenomenon. In the Soviet interpretation the disappearance of the state cannot be brought about by a simple quantitative reduction in state functions, neither can it be accelerated by mere administrative measures.⁸³

The confusion surrounding the doctrine of the withering away of the state was compounded by the adoption of the new Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1961. The often conflicting statements of the Program relating to the withering away of the state were promptly attacked in an ideological article published in the Yugoslav review, *Socijalizam*. The author of the article points out that, under the new Program, the Soviet society will enter the stage of communism with a state which has largely retained all its present functions. The Program declares that "the dictatorship of the proletariat has fulfilled its historic mission and has ceased to be indispensable in the USSR from the point of view of the tasks of internal development." Nevertheless, though the dictatorship of the proletariat has disappeared, the state remains but, instead of being a proletarian dictatorship, it is now "a state of the entire people, an organ expressing the interests and will of the people as a whole." In other words, the dictatorship of the proletariat disappears before the state withers away. The Yugoslav theoreticians point out that, according to the basic teachings

82. Wang Chia-hsiang, "In Refutation of Modern Revisionism's Reactionary Theory of the State," *Hongqi*, June 16, 1957, reprinted in the work *In Refutation of Modern Revisionism* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1958), p. 71.

83. P. Fedoseev, I. Pomelov and V. Cheprakov, *op. cit.*, p. 28-29.

of Marxism-Leninism, the dictatorship of the proletariat is, historically, the last form of the state, a "state which is so organized that it must wither away." Under the Program, the state not only remains in existence but becomes even stronger, because it now serves as the "main instrument for the socialist transformation of society." Since it is asserted in the Program that "the state organizes and unites the masses, exercises planned leadership of economic and cultural construction, and safeguards the revolutionary gains of the people,"⁸⁴ the Yugoslav theoreticians conclude therefrom that now "the communist social relationships, the entire material basis of communism and the communist consciousness of men become largely an affair of the state." The Yugoslav theoreticians express their surprise that there can be a state which has already lost all its class characteristics, and presumably represents an embodiment of the will of the entire people, yet still remains in existence. How can this be reconciled with the Marxian notion that the state is an expression of class antagonisms?⁸⁵ The Yugoslav critics also find another inconsistency in the new Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. It is asserted in the Program that the essential content of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union is no longer the coercion but the "creation, the building of new, classless society, and the defense of its gains against the enemies of socialism." If it is so, why must the dictatorship of the proletariat disappear? As a state without coercive functions, it could have remained in existence until its final disappearance, and did not have to be transformed into something not provided for by Marxism-Leninism. Yet the whole thesis about the obsolescence of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union is based precisely on the grounds that the exploiting classes have been abolished and the need for their suppression has ceased. What kind of a state is it, the Yugoslav communists ask, if it keeps existing in its full strength even when the dictatorship of the proletariat, the last form of the state, has become unnecessary?⁸⁶

The new Constitution contains surprisingly little in the way of constructive and concrete steps toward the implementation of the withering away of the state which was so emphatically expounded in the *Program*. On the contrary, the Yugoslav theorists stress the necessity of the state in the present social relations,⁸⁷ and shroud the implementation of its withering

84. The quotations from the Program are from a translation of the draft Program contained in *The Communist Blueprint for the Future: the complete texts of all four Communist manifestoes 1848-1961* (New York: Dutton, 1962), pp. 101-230.

85. Najdan Pašić, "Novi program KPSS o državi i socijalističkoj demokratiji u eri 'razgranate izgradnje komunizma,'" *Socijalizam*, No. 5-6 (1961). Abbreviated German translation in *Ostprobleme*, xiv, No. 13 (June 29, 1962), p. 407.

86. *Ibid.*, p. 407.

87. Petar Stambolić, "Forms of the Political System and Organization of the Federation." In *The Constitutional System of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia* (Belograd, Review of International Affairs, 1963, p. 45.

away in vague and ambiguous terms. Kardelj speaks of the ultimate transformation of the government into "a kind of self-government."⁸⁸ The Constitution speaks of the expanding and developing of "every form of social self-government and socialist democracy, especially in those fields in which the function of political power predominate," of "limiting coercion," and of promoting "the conditions for its elimination."⁸⁹ Assertions that the Constitution "gradually transforms the whole political system and mechanism into the organizational instrument of the united working people for managing their common social affairs,"⁹⁰ and similar platitudes seem to indicate that Yugoslavia is progressing toward the disappearance of the state with not much more success than the Soviet Union. Moreover, it has been asserted that the state power in the system of social self-government would persist "for a long time."⁹¹ The continuing importance of the state during the transitional period has been stressed by another Yugoslav theorist who asserted that, despite the increasing influence of the organizations of self-government on the regulation of social relations, the state still has to provide a general legal framework for such a purpose.⁹²

It should be pointed out that the Yugoslav insistence on the importance of the eventual disappearance of the state thus far had little practical significance for the Yugoslav people. However, together with the Chinese commune movement, it represents a constant challenge to Moscow, forcing the Soviet leaders to devote more attention than ever before to the forthcoming transition to full communism.

The Yugoslav communists question another basic concept of the Soviet (and of course, the Chinese,) version of Marxism-Leninism, namely, the assumption that the transition from capitalism to socialism is possible only under the guidance of a single workers' party. They reject such a theory as wholly unfounded, insisting that a political system with two or more political parties is just as capable of building socialism:

It is wrong to think that in the initial, or even the later phases of socialist development, all classes are liquidated and the working class itself is not liable to changes. In a complete and differentiated society, which is in a transitional period, the working class, too, may have more than one party, and may engage in political struggles and cooperate with other social classes and groups which ... embark upon a socialist road and participate in socialist programmes,

88. Kardelj, "Report..." 1963, p. 20.

89. Section VIII of the "Basic Principles." In Yugoslavia. Constitution, *The Constitution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia* (Translated by Petar Mijusković. Beograd: Secretariat for Information of the Federal Executive Council, 1963), p. 11.

90. Stambolić, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

91. Veljko Vlahović, Uloga vodećih faktora društvene svesti," *Komunist* (Beograd), XXI, No. 309 (Apr. 4, 1963), p. 4.

92. Andrija Gams, "O svojini, III: naša društvena svojina," *Naša stvarnost*, XVII, No. 5 (May 1963), p. 576.

defending not only various interests, but also different ideas about the forms and the pace of development.⁹³

The Yugoslavs attack the very concept of a political party in its traditional sense: the purpose of socialism should not be to maintain or to develop one or more political parties, but to bring about a "unique liberation process" for the purpose of expanding the material, political and other conditions to enable not only the workers but all men to enjoy real freedom. Such a process should result in a thoroughgoing change in the classical structure of society "through the modification, transformation and withering away of the state and parties..." It is stressed that, in accordance with these theoretical considerations, the Yugoslav communist party has already undergone a basic transformation. It is no longer called a "party" but a "league" (*savez*). It is still a political organization, and as such, it has certain characteristics of a party. It is asserted, however, that the League is already gradually losing the character of a party.⁹⁴

This should not be interpreted to mean that the Yugoslav communists really intend to admit a genuine political pluralism in their country. Thus far the League of the Communists is still the only political party in Yugoslavia, firmly anchored in Section VI of the "Basic Principles" of the new Constitution, and there is no indication that the regime is ready to tolerate any competitive political parties.

The Yugoslavs characterize their system as a form of direct democracy which finds its expression in the principle of self-government:

Democracy...is changing and becoming an increasingly socialist, *i.e.*, direct democracy, the self-management of men over things and not the rule of men over their fellowmen through representative institutions as the only instrument expressing the people's sovereignty.⁹⁵

The reason for introducing the principle of self-government into the Yugoslav political system is said to be the desire of protecting the socialist system both against degenerating into state capitalism and against the despotism of the administrative apparatus over the social initiative of the workers.⁹⁶ The essence of the Yugoslav political philosophy is the belief that, in every society which aims at socialism, there is a danger that the leading class would put itself above society. In order to combat this instinctive tendency, the Yugoslavs found two fundamental remedies:

(1) Social self-government, based on the notion that socialist democracy is a system in which the producers directly administer the economy. Social self-government is the right of the workers to manage enterprises, organi-

93. Jovan Djordjević, "Social Unity and the System of Social Self-government," *Review of International Affairs*, VI, No. 136 (Beograd, 1956), p. 9.

94. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

95. Jovan Djordjević, "Local Self-government in the World and Yugoslavia," *Review of International Affairs*, VII, No. 150 (Beograd, July 1, 1956), p. 15.

96. Kardelj's *Exposé*, p. 9.

zations and institutions of general interest in all fields of social life through their self-governing bodies. In the state administration, the system of social self-government was reflected in the institution of the Council of the Producers, which was one of the houses of the Yugoslav parliament. The Fundamental Law of 1953 laid down the principle of self-government in respect to economic enterprises. Under the new Constitution, the principle was applied to all "working organizations,"⁹⁷ including those in the spheres of education, culture, public health, social welfare and other public services.⁹⁸ In other words, the principle of self-government was extended far beyond the original area of economic enterprises to include public services, government agencies, communes and other institutions as well. The new Constitution enumerates various functions involved in the concept of self-management, *e.g.*, the management proper, organization of the production, development and other activities, general policy, planning, distribution of income, labor relations of the working organization, social welfare, labor safety, relationship of the working organization to the community, etc.⁹⁹

(2) Political self-government, *i.e.*, the government through the commune. The commune was defined as a "self-governing community of direct producers and consumers living on a certain territory."¹⁰⁰ In the transitional period between capitalism and communism, the commune is said to represent the basic political unit. In the future, after the disappearance of the state, the commune is supposed to become a mere association of free producers.¹⁰¹ The commune is the Yugoslav form of direct democracy operating through the voters' meetings and referendum. It exercises all rights and discharges all duties connected with the management of society except those that the Constitution confers on other organs.¹⁰² The commune system is featured as a basic institution which expresses and confirms the self-government of citizens as their "inalienable and immanent right."¹⁰³

Under the Constitution of 1963 the commune remains to be the "political foundation of the uniform socio-political system,"¹⁰⁴ the "*basic socio-political community*, within which the working people and their working organizations deal with basic questions concerning the material foundations of society and various issues of social, cultural and political life, and realize their

97. Pešelj, *op. cit.*, p. 694. Pešelj defines the working organization as "any collective body which is managed by its workers." *Ibid.*, p. 694.

98. "Social and State System," *Yugoslav Survey*, IV, No. 14 (July-Sept., 1963), p. 1969.

99. Art. 9, Nos. (1)-(8).

100. Charles Zalar, *A Critical Study of Yugoslav Communism with Special Regard to the Present Stage*. Unpublished dissertation (Washington, 1958), p. 449.

101. Josip Globovnik, "Nekateri problemi v zvezi s komunalnu ureditvijo," *Ljudska uprava*, VIII, No. 1-2 (1955), pp. 1-10.

102. Cf. Živorad Kovačević, *Communal System in Yugoslavia* (Beograd, Jugoslavija, 1958), p. 4.

103. Djordjević, "Local Self-government..." p. 15.

104. Art. 73.

rights to self-government in production and distribution according to labor."¹⁰⁵

The framers of the new Constitution originally attempted to extend the system of self-government, formerly practiced by the councils of producers, by including representatives from various areas of self-government, or through creating a number of specialized councils according to a particular field of self-government. The solution which was finally adopted was to create a number of working communities in the federal and republican assemblies.

At the federal level, the principle of self-government was implemented by dividing the Federal Assembly into five different Councils (the Federal Council, consisting of delegates from the communes and the republics, the Council of Economy, the Council of Education and Culture, the Council of Social Welfare and National Health, and the Council for Political and Administrative Affairs), while, at the commune level, the assembly consists of a communal chamber and a chamber of working communities.¹⁰⁶

Under the new Constitution, the terminological difference between the social self-management and the political self-management was largely obliterated, and the self-management is practiced in a "unified social-economic system." As to the effectiveness of the system of self-management, serious doubts were expressed with respect to its feasibility outside a closed communist dictatorship:

Only in a free society, where no political pressures are exercised on either the election or the functioning of the workers collectives, could this institution demonstrate its viability, and perhaps, be of certain advantage in given conditions.¹⁰⁷

The Yugoslav system was described as an assembly government with built-in plural groups, and was called as a form of neo-corporativism.¹⁰⁸

In spite of its inadequacies, it appears that the Yugoslav concept of self-management represents a genuine effort to make the workers feel that they are working for themselves and, to an extent, are co-partners and shareholders in the organization. At any rate, the Yugoslav experiment is an interesting variety differing favorably from the drab uniformity of the Soviet sponsored people's democracies. Among the communists, the Yugoslavs are major innovators not only in the economic decentralization, but also in political matters. The principle of rotation of all elective offices,

105. "Social and State System," p. 1978 (Italics in the original.)

106. Art. 165 of the Constitution uses the term "chamber" instead of "council." The latter term is used by *Yugoslav Survey*, a publication of the Federal Secretariat for Information of Yugoslavia. "Social and State System," *Yugoslav Survey*, IV, No. 14 (July-Sept. 1963), p. 1981.

107. Pešelj, *op. cit.*, p. 696.

108. Loewenstein, *op. cit.*, p. 382. Loewenstein points out that if the system succeeds, it would be for the first time that functional representation was integrated into a society intended to be democratic.

introduced by the 1963 Constitution, seems to be working, as well as other elements of the complicated government mechanism. This does not mean, however, that Yugoslavia is no longer a totalitarian or authoritarian state. The essential fact remains that, in Yugoslavia, still only one set of social and political ideas is tolerated to the complete exclusion of others. Representative democracy presupposes representation of different opinions in the social sphere which can be freely translated into the political sphere. There is still only one officially admitted opinion in Yugoslavia, and this exclusive opinion can be discussed on the political scene only within strict limits. No genuine alternative to the official set of ideas is recognized. The neo-corporatist system in Yugoslavia has thus far been a mere expression of the totalitarian control of socio-economic and political life by the Communist League, and does not represent a free operation of plural forces. It is still only an experiment which perhaps has some hopeful potentialities.

Algeria

The Algerian political system was described by a communist source as that of "national democracy." The purpose of this state form is said to be "to help accumulate, during the transitional stage, as many quantitative and qualitative elements of a non-capitalist development so as to make the transition toward socialism a real possibility."¹⁰⁹ The official name of Algeria is "the Algerian Democratic and Popular Republic (*République Algérienne démocratique et populaire*),"¹¹⁰ sometimes also called "the Algerian People's Democratic Republic."¹¹¹ Ahmed Ben Bella defined the component parts of this name as follows: "Democratic republic" means a "system that provides for freedom of speech and discussion and investigation, and [contributes] to the improvement of the common lot and the strengthening of internal security and world peace." The term "people's republic" was defined as an "embodiment of the will of the people..." "Arab republic" means to him that Algeria is a "possessor of the Arab (cultural) legacy and has been molded by it." Ben Bella also cautioned that the term "people's democratic republic" was not intended to mean that Algeria belonged to any particular camp, either Eastern or Western.¹¹²

109. Eleni Pupti, "O první ústavě Alžírské demokratické lidové republiky," *Právník*, III, No. 2 (1964), p. 134.

110. Algeria. Constitution, *La Constitution* (Annaba: Impr. Centrale, 1963?), Art. 1.

111. Hisham B. Sharabi uses this name in the translation of documents included in Part 2 of his *Nationalism and Revolution in the Arab World* (Princeton, N.J.: Van Nostrand, 1966).

112. *Ibid.*, Part 2. Selections from speeches of Ahmed Ben Bella delivered during 1962-63, pp. 114-115.

Algeria was included in this study of people's democracy not because of the resemblance of its name to that of certain communist states, but mainly because it represents something that has been described as an "intriguing attempt by the Algerian revolutionary regime to achieve a synthesis of Marxism and Islam."¹¹³ The communists fully recognize the importance of this experiment, thus far confined to Algeria, and hope that its anticipated success would have a major impact on the entire Arab world.¹¹⁴

In conformity with the Tripoli Program adopted in June 1962, the Algerian Constitution of September 10, 1963, made socialism one of the basic principles of the Algerian state. Among the goals of the revolution, socialism was placed on the same level of importance as independence. The type of socialism on which the political and administrative structure of the Algerian Democratic and Popular Republic was based was called "purely Algerian socialism," in which the peasants rather than the urban proletariat formed the foundation.¹¹⁵

The conditions in Algeria were more favorable to socialism than in any other Arab country, as the destructions caused by over seven years of war and the extent of agricultural and industrial property abandoned after the exodus of the European settlers made some sort of collective ownership and administration the best apparent solution. A series of decrees, enacted in 1963, initiated the socialization drive by giving a legal sanction to the principle of self-management (auto-gestion) which was already established in fact during the Algerian war.¹¹⁶ Revolutionary socialism repudiated the notion of parliamentary democracy by adhering to the concept of popular democracy, the essence of which was seen in social and economic liberation. This in turn made necessary the establishment of a single revolutionary party which would represent the "people." At the Congress of the National Liberation Front (FLN) in 1964, the Front was constituted as a vanguard party necessary "to realize the goals of the people's democratic revolution."¹¹⁷ The establishment of the FLN as an exclusive vanguard party was a serious blow to the Algerian communists, whose party was banned in November 1962. The even worse disaster came,

113. Gordon H. Torrey and John F. Devlin, "Arab Socialism," In Jack H. Thompson and Robert D. Reischauer, *Modernization of the Arab World* (Princeton, N.J.: Van Nostrand, 1966), p. 180.

114. Bashir Hadj Ali, "Qu'est-ce qu'un révolutionnaire algérien en 1964?" *Cahiers du communisme*, No. 1964. Abbreviated German translation: "Algerien: Schlüssel zum Maghreb," *Ostprobleme*, xvii, No. 3 (Feb. 12, 1965), p. 79.

115. Sharabi, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

116. Texts of the decrees and other pertinent documents in Algeria. Ministère de l'information. *Documents on Self-Management (Auto-gestion)* (Bone: Central Printing House, 1963), and *Documents: l'autogestion en Algérie* (Annaba: Impr. Centrale, 1966).

117. Excerpts from the FLN Program, adopted on May 27, 1964, in Sharabi, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

however, from Moscow when, upon the occasion of President Ben Bella's state visit in Russia, direct relations were established between the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the National Liberation Front in which the latter was promoted to a rank of a "quasi-communist brotherly party."¹¹⁸ To appease the Algerian communists, the FLN Congress in Algiers in 1964, upon Ben Bella's initiative, opened its ranks to the individual communists, whereupon the Communist Party of Algeria decided to dissolve, so as to let individual members to join the FLN.¹¹⁹ Until then, the communist attitude toward the Front of National Liberation was cautious. They abstained from any open criticism, but asserted that, though they did not oppose the idea of a single vanguard party in principle, they felt that it was not yet the time for the creation of such a party. They pointed out that a national unity could be realized, for the time being, only within the framework of a united, democratic front.¹²⁰ Bashir Hadj Ali, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Algerian Communist Party, said in August 1963 the following:

Algeria is still in the people's democratic stage. It is necessary to create the essential instrument, a united front, to bring together all national forces which would include the patriotic elements of the national bourgeoisie which would be centered around the enlarged Tripoli Program, and would be directed against the common enemy, neo-colonialism. It is necessary to watch over the revolutionary application of the forthcoming Constitution in order to bring to a successful end the present stage of the revolution, and to proceed to the socialist stage which will be long, hard and difficult.¹²¹

Even when it became possible for the Algerian communists to join the FLN, the question was raised whether or not a political leadership which was neither proletarian nor bourgeois, could lead a country toward socialism. The answer was only a reluctant and qualified yes.¹²² It was conceded that the tasks of a national democratic revolution could still be accomplished despite the absence of a leadership by the working class, "since the necessary unity could be temporarily assured by a radical bourgeois leadership."¹²³ Furthermore, the communists consoled themselves by asserting that the

118. Wolfgang Berner, "Moskau und die arabische Revolution," *Ostprobleme*, XVIII, No. 3 (Feb. 11, 1966), p. 67.

119. It will be recalled that the pro-Soviet faction of the Communist Party of Egypt decided in April 1965 to follow the Algerian example, and to dissolve. This event was followed by the negotiations between Nasser's Arab Socialist Union and the Communist Party of Italy which apparently were intended to open the way for the inclusion of the Egyptian communists in the Arab Socialist Union. The Egyptian communists in turn were ready to recognize the Arab Socialist Union as a single vanguard party of the Egyptian revolution. (Berner, *op. cit.*, p. 67).

120. Pupti, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

121. Quoted *ibid.*, p. 127.

122. Eleni Pupti, "K některým problémům mladého Alžírka," *Právník*, CIV, No. 7 (1965), p. 605.

123. Pupti, "O první ústavě..." p. 133.

proletariat, though not a decisive force, "was nevertheless in a position to influence the political leadership in Algeria so as to bring about a gradual transition to socialism."¹²⁴ The secondary role the communists were allowed to play in Algeria was hardly to their liking as is apparent from this statement coming from a communist source:

...In Algeria, as well as in any other country, the Marxists would insist on having their own proletarian party if the leadership of the single political party of that particular country should be in other hands than those of the progressive wing of national revolutionaries, especially if it should be in the hands of a group dominated by the bourgeois ideology.¹²⁵

Statements of this kind naturally have probably a mere academic value. It is doubtful what the communists could do about the situation if, because of their numerical weakness, they do not want to be entirely eliminated from political life.

The distinctive feature of the Algerian socialism is its synthesis of Marxism and Islam. A communist source calls this attempt "eclecticism."¹²⁶ The communists seem to be very apologetic with respect to their acceptance of Islam as an essential part of the Algerian revolution. Bashir Hadj Ali made the following statement with respect to the communist toleration of Islam:

The history of our revolution shows that the qualities of a revolutionary are not necessarily determined by the fact of whether he is a believer or an unbeliever. One can be a revolutionary as a believer as well as an unbeliever. At the same time, a believer can be a reactionary to the same extent as an unbeliever. What makes a revolutionary is his attitude to the Charter of Algiers (the FLN Program) and to the class struggle.¹²⁷

124. Pupti, "K některým problémům...", p. 609. This was perhaps so under Ben Bella's presidency whose pro-Soviet leanings were notorious. After his overthrow by Colonel Houari Boumedienne on July 19, 1965, the communist chances in Algeria were apparently greatly reduced. Boumedienne, like many other Algerian nationalists, is said to be strongly influenced by the views of the late Frantz Fanon. See Fernand Hadjadj, "Les communistes et l'Algérie depuis la chute de Ben Bella," *Est & ouest*, No. 351 (Nov. 1965). An abbreviated German translation in "Algerien nach dem Sturz Ben Bellas," *Ostprobleme*, xviii, No. 3 (Feb. 11, 1966), p. 71. Frantz Fanon was the theorist of the national revolution whose thought engendered, among other, the Algerian war for independence. Fanon was concerned essentially with the psychological aspects of the colonial rule, and with the transformation of the oppressed colonial nations into militant revolutionaries. While it is impossible to go deeper into Fanon's thought within the framework of this study, it should be at least pointed out that his outlook is strongly nationalistic. He regards violence by an oppressed people as necessary and desirable. He does not see any need for ideology, program and theory, which he regards as "neither necessary to initiate the struggle, to create the needed personality changes, nor to shape the post-revolutionary society." John A. Ehrenreich, "Fanon revisited," *Monthly Review*, xix, No. 5 (Oct. 1967), pp. 36-39. For an essence of Fanon's thought, see his *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1968).

125. *Ibid.*, p. 610.

126. *Ibid.*, p. 606.

127. Bashir Hadj Ali, "Qu'est-ce qu'un révolutionnaire...", *op. cit.*, p. 81. In his

At any rate, the acceptance of the Islam is regarded by the communists as a mere temporary phenomenon which is bound to disappear as soon as the communist influence becomes stronger. The following statement appears very instructive:

We must regard the religious faith of the Algerian toiling masses as a natural stage of the development of their country. They can get rid of it to the extent of how successfully they solve the problems of their social existence within the framework of socialism, and to the extent of how their cultural standard improves so that religion could gradually be replaced by more progressive forms of social conscience.¹²⁸

The communists placed high hopes into Algeria. At least during the Ben Bella era, the communists felt confident that Algerian socialism would eventually evolve into "scientific," i.e., Marxist, socialism, possibly by means of an "alliance of all revolutionary forces." In a communiqué on a Conference of the communist delegates from the Maghreb countries in 1964 it was pointed out, significantly, that the experience had shown that "there could be only one socialism, scientific socialism, in which the workers, the peasants, and the revolutionary intelligentsia represent the main driving forces."¹²⁹ On a number of occasions, the communists made it plain that Algeria's was not mere "Arab socialism," which they condemned as an ideology of the feudal and bourgeois opposition groups.¹³⁰ Ben Bella's declaration, made to the correspondent of the *Tribune de Lausanne* in 1963, that socialism meant for him a transfer of the means of production into the hands of the workers, was interpreted as a proof that Ben Bella had accepted Marxism as a basis of the future Algerian society.¹³¹

If things went wrong for the communists in Algeria after the departure of Ahmed Ben Bella, it is doubtful that they would fare any better in trying, for example, to fit Nasser's personal leadership into the communist single-party system, even through an infiltration of the Arab Socialist Union. It is even less likely that they would be more successful in other Arab countries, especially those dominated by the Ba'th ideology. For example, though Syria is called a "democratic people's socialist republic" in the Ba'th Provisional Constitution of April 27, 1964, the Ba'th has never cooperated with the communists in Syria.¹³² As Hisham Sharabi pointed out, for the Arabs

interview with the correspondent of *L'Unità*, Rome, June 30, 1964, Hadj Ali said among other things: "The Algerian masses are going forward toward socialism with the "Koran" in one hand, and with "das Kapital" in the other." Quoted in *op. cit.*, p. 81, note.

128. Pupti, "O první ústavě...", p. 133.

129. "Za mir, natsional'noe osvobozhdenie, demokratii i sotsial'nyi progres; kommuniike o vstreche predstavitelei kommunistov arabskikh stran," *Pravda*, Dec. 14, 1964. An abbreviated German translation in *Ostprobleme*, XVIII, No. 3 (Feb. 11, 1966), p. 69.

130. Quoted in Pupti, "K některým problémům...", pp. 607-608.

131. Quoted in Pupti, "O první ústavě...", p. 124.

132. Torrey and Devlin, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

Communism constitutes an alien movement with an unintelligible philosophy, for the nationalists, it is an anti-nationalist doctrine and is therefore opposed. Though the revolutionary socialists implicitly accept certain aspects of theoretical Marxism, they are adamantly opposed to communist totalitarian dogmatism, the theory of class struggle, and the views on private property. As an internal political movement, communism has earned the antagonism of all parties and groups in the Arab world, from the extreme socialist left to the traditionalist right. The various small communist parties of the Arab world have always been regarded as instruments of a foreign power, which has added to public mistrust and has led to their suppression in every country in the Arab world.¹³³

*Congo (Stanleyville)*¹³⁴

The People's Republic of the Congo was proclaimed in Stanleyville on September 5, 1964, by Christophe Gbenye.¹³⁵ At that time, a large part of the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Leopoldville, later Kinshasa) was in the hands of the insurgents, the Simba warriors of Gaston Soumialot, the *maquis* of Pierre Mulele, the shock-troopers of Vital Pakassa, and other smaller rebel groups.¹³⁶

The span of life of the "Congolese people's republic" was so short that it would hardly deserve more than a brief footnote in a study devoted to people's democracy, were it not for the fact that the emergence of the People's Republic of the Congo was accompanied by an extensive ideological indoctrination of the partisans. Had the establishment of the people's republic of the Congo been successful, it would have represented the most recent embodiment of people's democracy at a time when this political form was already on the wane. The ideological build-up around the People's Republic of the Congo also shows that the state form of people's democracy had not become an entirely obsolete concept in the communist terminology, but that it may be revived any time the communists feel that it can serve some useful purpose. It is of course necessary to remember that most of the Congolese rebels were strongly influenced by the Chinese communists who had never fully accepted national democracy as a political form of transition to socialism, although they paid some sort of lip-service to it when it was first officially announced.

133. Sharabi, *op. cit.*, pp. 99-100.

134. The present name of Stanleyville is Kisangani.

135. Article 1, Décret-loi du 5 septembre 1964. Text in: Centre de recherche et d'information socio-politiques, Bruxelles and Institut national d'études politiques, Léopoldville (Kinshasa), *Congo 1964* (Bruxelles, 1954), pp. 267-268.

136. For an excellent exposé of the Congolese insurrection of 1964, and its Chinese affiliations, see: Wolfgang Berner, "Peking und der kongolesische Partisanenkrieg," *Ostprobleme*, xviii, No. 20 (Oct. 7, 1966), pp. 610-614. The same issue of the *Ostprobleme* includes abstracts from *Les Cahiers de Gamboma*; instructions politiques et militaires des Partisans Congolais, 1964-1965, published by the Centre de recherche et d'information socio-politiques in Brussels, pp. 615-636.

A few words on the revolutionary developments immediately preceding the establishment of the People's Republic of the Congo seem appropriate. Under the impact of the August 1963 events in the neighboring Republic of the Congo (Brazzaville), a group of Congolese radicals founded, on October 3, 1963, in Leopoldville a revolutionary organization called the National Liberation Council (Conseil national de libération—CNL), the purpose of which was to carry out a complete "decolonization" of the Congo. The Council soon transferred its activities from Leopoldville to Brazzaville. It was headed by Christophe Gbenye as president, and Egide Davidson Bocheley as vice president, both former ministers in the Gizenga Government in Stanleyville in 1960/61.¹³⁷ Both leaders, Gbenye and Bocheley, sought help from the major communist powers. A rift occurred soon between them, and while Gbenye inclined toward Moscow, Bocheley sought Chinese assistance. With help from Peking, the Bocheley group set up a training and indoctrination camp near Gamboma, with Félix Mukulumbundu as commanding officer. Mukulumbundu obtained his political and military training in China where he stayed in 1961-1963. The commanding officer of the Forces of the National Liberation Front, associated with the Bocheley group, (Forces armées révolutionnaires du Front de libération nationale—FAR), was Vital Pakassa who, like Mukulumbundu, was former officer of Gizenga. Pakassa's partisans operated from the Gamboma camp as a military base, and undertook numerous raids into the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Leopoldville). Within a short time, the Bocheley group came completely under the influence of the Chinese-oriented communists.

The second revolutionary group operating in the Congo was a *maquis* movement led by Pierre Mulele, a former Minister in the Lumumba Government. He, too, spent some time in the People's Republic of China (1962-1963), and after his return to the Congo, organized a partisan force in his home province of Kvilu. Mulele's movement represented a curious mixture of a primitive interpretation of Marxism-Leninism, strongly influenced by Chinese communism, traditional local messianistic cults prevailing in the Kvilu region, and old Bantu magic, all this blended into a militant doctrine of revolution through a partisan warfare. The terrorism of Mulele's warriors forced the local population to collaborate with the partisans.¹³⁸ It was

137. More on the National Liberation Council in : Centre de recherche et d'information socio-politiques, Bruxelles and Institut national d'études politiques, Leopoldville, *Congo 1964* (Bruxelles, 1965), pp. 31ff. See also *Études congolaises*, vii, No. 7 (August-September 1964), pp. 55-65.

138. For a brief biographical sketch of Mulele, and the history of the origins and the early stage of his *maquis* movement see: Centre de recherche et d'information socio-politiques, Bruxelles and Institut national d'études politiques, Leopoldville (Kinshasa), *Congo 1964* (Bruxelles, 1965), pp. 9ff.

The Mulele doctrine has a distinct Marxist-Leninist tinge, although its Marxism-Leninism is reduced to bare fundamentals. The class struggle is stated in terms of a

reported that the group soon numbered some 10,000 warriors. The operations of Mulele's *maquis* remained limited to a relatively small region which, in turn, made it possible for him to hold his positions longer than the other rebel groups.¹³⁹

The third main rebel group in the Congo was headed by Gaston Soumialot, who was Gbenye's chief of propaganda, and who was appointed by Gbenye to the post of CNL delegate for Eastern Congo on January 1, 1966. He went to Bujumbura in Burundi to organize a partisan force for the Gbenye group. It is believed that Soumialot received some Chinese assistance in creating his force. Like other rebel groups, Soumialot's Simba warriors undertook many raids into the Leopoldville Congo.¹⁴⁰

When Gbenye, on Soumialot's request, arrived in Stanleyville in September 1964, he set up a revolutionary government for the entire territory of the Congo, with the name the People's Republic of the Congo. Christophe Gbenye became its President and Prime Minister, Thomas Kanza foreign minister and Gaston Soumialot defense minister. The revolutionary character of the government was indicated by the word "people," although the regime was not a people's democracy or a people's republic similar to

conflict between the rich and the poor. The rich class is the class in power, the class of the exploiters, strengthened by the foreign imperialists. The poor class is the class of oppressed workers and peasants. Manual labor is exalted, as in the works of Karl Marx. The oppressed class is exhorted to rise against the oppressors and to overthrow the existing regime of the Congo. The main emphasis is on the support of the villagers dedicated to agricultural labor. Their way of life in the countryside is regarded as superior to that in the towns and cities. (Renée C. Fox, Willy De Craemer et Jean-Marie Ribaucourt, "La deuxième indépendance; étude d'un cas: La rébellion au Kwilu," *Études congolaises*, VIII, No. 1 (Jan.-Feb. 1965), pp. 16-20. This information was found in a notebook belonging to a member of Mulele's rebel force. The Chinese influence on the indoctrination of the Mulele's *maquis* is apparent from frequent references to Communist China which is called "the land of happiness." The Chinese are called "people with skin similar to ours," and hope is expressed that when the "bad government" (meaning the Leopoldville Congo) is overthrown, help will be asked "from another country." *Ibid.*, p. 18. Reference is made to a study by A.-R. Ilunga and B. Kalonji, "Les événements du Kwilu." *Études congolaises*, VI, No. 3 (March 1964).

Mulele's "socialism" is completely wrapped up in the myth of his personal charisma. He and his followers went far to making him seem different from ordinary men and endowed with superhuman and supernatural powers. He was said to be invulnerable to gun shots. It is reported that Mulele staged a proof of his invulnerability by having been shot at, by his own soldiers, who were using blank cartridges. He was supposed to possess the quality of being able to change himself into an animal, a snake; he also was said to be able to move long distances in the form of a spirit or of a bird. His adherents believed that they too possessed such qualities as long as they were with him. (Fox and others, *op. cit.*, p. 20-21.)

139. Berner, *op. cit.*, p. 611.

140. On Soumialot, see the historical sketch in: Centre de recherche et d'information, Bruxelles and Institut national d'études politiques, Leopoldville, *op. cit.*, pp. 55ff. On the action of the Soumialot forces in Uvira and North-Katanga, see *ibid.*, pp. 54ff. See also Berner, *op. cit.*, p. 612.

its European or Asian namesakes, having no uniting ideology or revolutionary party. It was also a far cry from the type of state described in the ideological instructions for the Congolese partisans.

Prime Minister Tshombe's forces captured Stanleyville in November 1964, and, in the course of 1965, the insurgents were practically wiped out in the northeast and along the eastern border. The exiled rebel leaders created, in Cairo, a Supreme Council of the Revolution (Conseil suprême de la révolution—CSR) under the presidency of Soumialot. Gbenye and Bocheley were deposed a short time later and, in August 1965, Soumialot was recognized by the People's Republic of China as the rightful leader of the revolution in the Congo.

During its brief existence, the People's Republic of the Congo had little to contribute as a revolutionary regime to the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist theory of the state and revolution.

The Congolese rebellion, however, was not entirely without significance for a study of people's democracy. The instructions for the political and military indoctrination of the partisans, collected in the so-called *Cahiers de Gamboma*, indicate that matters of theory were given a considerable attention in the manuals issued for the training of guerrilla units.¹⁴¹

The political system designed for the People's Republic of the Congo by the authors of the instructions was that of "new democracy." Since the instructions bear an imprint of Chinese communist influence, it can be assumed that the term "new democracy," refers to Mao's "new democracy," a term applied by Mao to describe a communist dictatorship based on a coalition. This type of "democracy" is defined in the instructions as a "dictatorship of an alliance comprising all the revolutionary forces in the country, with the proletariat as its leader."¹⁴²

The revolution which would lead to the establishment of "new democra-

141. The *Cahiers de Gamboma* is a handbook of Chinese revolutionary doctrine for the developing countries, with special reference to Black Africa. The documents were found in the village of Nioki in the Democratic Republic of the Congo-Leopoldville (Kinshasa) when a group of partisans of Bocheley was expelled by the Government forces. The partisans apparently came from Camp Gamboma, the commandant of which was a former Gizenga officer, Félix Mukulumbundu. The commanding officer of the partisan commandoes, Forces armées révolutionnaires du front de libération nationale, the FAR, was Vital Pakassa, also a former Gizenga officer. The partisan commando undertook a raid on the village of Nioki in June 1965, and left behind six issues of political and military instructions for the Congolese partisans, called collectively *Les Cahiers de Gamboma*, which were published by the Centre de recherche et d'information socio-politiques in Brussels. The instructions include handwritten notes from the period June 1964-February 1965. They served as a teaching aid for camp inmates, and represent the Chinese interpretation of Marxist-Leninist military, political, and economic concepts for the use of the partisans. An abbreviated version of the *Cahiers* can be found in a German translation in *Ostprobleme*, xviii, No. 20 (Oct. 7, 1966), pp. 617-636.

142. "Die Schulungshefte von Gamboma." *Ostprobleme*, xviii, No. 20 (Oct. 7, 1966), p. 624.

cy" in the Congo is called the "new democratic revolution," and would require, according to the instructions for the partisans, a combination of two revolutions, a *national* revolution, and a *democratic* revolution. Though the democratic revolution is regarded as of a secondary nature, it should not be neglected but should be properly combined with the national revolution.

The tasks of the *democratic* revolution in the Congo were defined as follows:

- (1) An overthrow of the rule of the reactionary classes, *i.e.*, of the ruling minority of the agents of imperialism, the Congolese administrative and compradore bourgeoisie, and the reactionary feudal landlords.
- (2) Carrying out of an agrarian reform.
- (3) Establishment and observance of democratic and labor-union freedoms for all anti-imperialist forces of the country.
- (4) Establishment of democratically elected and controlled political institutions: a national assembly, a government responsible to the national assembly, etc.

The tasks of the *national* revolution include:

- (1) An overthrow of a neo-colonialist regime.
- (2) Removal of all foreign military bases, and annulment of all treaties which were unfairly imposed upon the country.
- (3) A reorganization of the army, gendarmerie, police, administration, judiciary, and public education, etc., in such a way that they would primarily serve the interests of the whole people.
- (4) Appointing of patriots to all leading positions in the state; creation of an independent currency.
- (5) Nationalization of natural resources (mines, forests, etc.), plantations, cattle-breeding, commercial, banking and industrial enterprises as long as they represent foreign capital, briefly, creation of an independent economy.
- (6) Giving the educational program of the universities, high schools, and elementary schools a scientific and national content; building of schools of all grades... Nationalization of educational and welfare institutions (including hospitals, medical establishments), of all press, information and propaganda organs which are being misused by the neo-colonialists, to prevent the establishment of new ones, etc.¹⁴³

Apparently any social class can participate in the revolution, provided it is anti-imperialist-minded and patriotic. The "driving forces" of the revolution are not only the "non-exploiting" classes, but the "exploiting" classes as well. The "non-exploiting" classes consist of the proletariat, semi-proletariat, village poor and middle farmers. The "exploiting classes" include middle bourgeoisie, petty bourgeoisie as well as "feudal" landowners, "administrative" bourgeoisie, and "compradore" bourgeoisie. Obviously, the participation in the national revolution is open to all, including government officials, politicians, big business executives, and others, though

143. *Les Cahiers de Gamboma*, No. 1, (Dec. 12, 1964). See *Ostprobleme* xviii, No. 20 (Oct. 7, 1966), pp. 617-618.

their participation is supposed to be only temporary and their eligibility in the revolutionary movement must be demonstrated by an appropriate attitude, such as opposition to recalcitrant "feudal overlords," or "imperialist" powers.¹⁴⁴

While the authors of the instructions do not appear to be very strict as to the eligibility of the upper and middle classes in the Congolese revolution, they are even more liberal with respect to the proletariat. They are well aware that the industrial proletariat is very scarce in countries such as the Congo, and are therefore eager to include in the proletarian category as many social groups as possible. The proletariat is defined as consisting of "those who have no means of production or exchange of their own, and who therefore make their livelihood by selling their manpower to the capitalists." The group of semi-proletarians is larger and includes workers who own some means of production such as a piece of land, a workshop, which alone would not suffice for their subsistence, and who therefore have to sell their manpower to the capitalists. The proletariat also includes the so-called "Lumpenproletariat" as a social class, among them "the unemployed, gangs of bandits, gamblers (card-players), and so forth, provided that they "can be educated, and get more close attention."¹⁴⁵

The participation of the bourgeoisie in the national-democratic revolution is of course a feature characteristic of "national democracy." A comparison is made between the "new democracy" and "national democracy," and their similarities as well as differences are singled out. Both political forms are based on an "alliance of all revolutionary classes," and both oppose the imperialist powers, their military blocs as well as the "feudal" system. Both are regarded as political systems of the transition period, and both aim at a national liberation.¹⁴⁶ The basic difference between the two political forms is expressed in the following sentence:

National democracy can exist only in a country where the social classes barely differ one from another, and where, for that reason, the proletariat is unable to exercise an unquestionable leadership. (Examples: Guinea, Mali, Indonesia) As soon as the proletariat is in a position to impose its leadership, the regime becomes a new democracy.¹⁴⁷

In the interpretation of the authors of the instructions, "new democracy" is still a mere intermediate stage, which is expected to evolve into "people's democracy" "as soon as the power of the bourgeoisie within the coalition dwindles away in favor of the proletariat allied with the poor peasantry."¹⁴⁸

144. *Les Cahiers de Gamboma*, No. 1, (Dec. 12. 1964). See *Ostprobleme* XVIII, No. 20 (Oct. 7, 1966), p. 619.

145. *Les Cahiers de Gamboma*, No. 1, 2e leçon, Jan. 13, 1965. Abbreviated German version in *Ostprobleme*, XVIII, No. 20 (Oct. 7, 1966) p. 620. See also note 16 at p. 34, *supra*.

146. *Ibid.*, p. 624-625.

147. *Ibid.*, p. 625.

148. *Ibid.*, p. 625.

People's democracy is presented here as a higher stage on the road to socialism, more progressive than "national democracy" and "new democracy." For the Congo, "new democracy" is preferred as a transitional form.

Although the communist origin of the instructions is apparent, no reference is made to a Marxist-Leninist party. Nevertheless, a need for a revolutionary vanguard party is stressed in Number 1, lesson 5, which is entitled "Les armées de la révolution de démocratie nouvelle au Congo." The Congolese people is said to require four weapons for a successful "new democratic" revolution: (1) A revolutionary vanguard party. (2) A good liberation army. (3) A powerful peasant movement, and (4) A united front of all these weapons.¹⁴⁹

According to the authors of the instructions, the role of the vanguard party, in the absence of a communist party, was to be assumed by the *Conseil national de libération* (CNL) founded in Leopoldville in 1963.

The *Cahiers de Gamboma* also include instructions of a purely military nature, and a discussion of the African tribalism which is described as a "major African plague." The instructions were not restricted to the Congolese partisan war, but apparently applied to the Cameroun, and possibly to Nigeria, as well. The Congo rebellion is an evidence that the concept of people's democracy is still very much present in the minds of the instigators of communist revolutions.

Congo (Brazzaville)

A study of people's democracy should mention at least briefly the former French Congo, now the Republic of the Congo, which is called, with reference to its capital, the Brazzaville Congo. Although nothing in the name or in the constitution indicates that the Brazzaville Congo is a "people's democracy",¹⁵⁰ its present government is for all practical purposes a people's democratic or, rather, a totalitarian government, as was well recognized by the major communist powers who greatly increased their embassy personnel in Brazzaville after the August 1963 revolution in which the government of Fulbert Youlou was overthrown by a small group of revolutionaries. The Brazzaville Congo is ruled by a single party, the National Revolutionary Movement (*Mouvement national révolutionnaire*, MNR), which has its own politbureau, central committee, united labor organization, youth organization, and the like. Terms borrowed from the communist vocabulary, such as democratic centralism, revolutionary vigilance, superiority

149. *Les Cahiers de Gamboma*, no. 1, 2e leçon, Jan. 13, 1965. Abbreviated German version in *Ostprobleme*, xviii, no. 20 (Oct. 7, 1966), pp. 625-628.

150. Article 1 of the Constitution provides that the Republic of the Congo is "indivisible, secular, democratic and social." Congo (Brazzaville) Constitution. *La Constitution de la République du Congo* (Brazzaville, Ministère de l'intérieur et de l'information, n.d.) Art. 1.

of the party over the government, are a standard feature of the Brazzaville political atmosphere. The term "African socialism" was rejected by the First Congress of the National Revolutionary Movement in favor of "scientific socialism." The territory of the Brazzaville Congo became a military base for the Congolese partisans operating in Leopoldville Congo during the 1963-1965 insurrection.¹⁵¹

Cuba

The Russians seem to have considerable difficulty concerning where to place, in the Marxist-Leninist theory of the state, the first communist system established in Latin America. It will be recalled that Ponomarev included Cuba among "national democracies," together with Ghana, Guinea, Mali, and Indonesia.¹⁵² In the May Day slogans of 1962, Cuba was listed by the Soviet leadership as a country which "has embarked on the path of building socialism," and it was placed after Czechoslovakia (then already a socialist state). [Yugoslavia was included in the same category. In 1963, the May Day slogans placed Cuba among countries which have already begun to build socialism, and it was listed alphabetically among the people's democracies.¹⁵³ In Brezhnev's Report to the Twenty Third Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on March 29, 1966, Cuba was included among the people's democracies and the socialist states.¹⁵⁴ A Soviet monograph on the governmental reorganization of revolutionary Cuba, published in 1964, uses various semantic variants to describe Cuba's political status, such as that Cuba "firmly entered the path of building socialism."¹⁵⁵ A more recent Soviet book on Cuban history calls Cuba "the first socialist republic in the new world,"¹⁵⁶ although elsewhere in the same work is repeatedly asserted that Cuba is only "building socialism."¹⁵⁷

For the Soviet Union, Cuba's Fidel Castro is, of course, a sort of *enfant terrible*, partly because he preaches the doctrine of revolution by armed uprising for Latin America, whereas the Russians as well as the pro-Moscow

151. A brief sketch of the situation in Fritz Schatten, "Afrika-Krise in Permanenz." *Ostprobleme*, xvii, No. 3 (Feb. 12, 1965), p. 69.

152. See p. 118, *supra*.

153. James M. Daniel, "Latin America," in Cyril E. Black and Thomas P. Thornton, ed., *Communism and Revolution: the Strategic Uses of Political Violence* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1965, c1964), p. 350.

154. Leonid I. Brezhnev, Otchetnii doklad Tsentral'nogo komiteta KPSS XXIII s'ezdu Kommunisticheskoi partii Sovetskogo Soiuza. Doklad Pervogo Sekretaria tovarishcha L. I. Brezhneva, 29 marta 1966 goda. *Pravda*, (March 30, 1966).

155. Nikolai Nikanorovich Razumovich, *Gosudarstvennye preobrazovaniia revoliutsionnoi Kuby* (Moskva: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia, 1964), p. 3.

156. Lev IUrevich Slezkin, *Istoriia Kubinskoi respubliki* (Moskva: Izd-vo Nauka, 1966), p. 5.

157. *Ibid.*, p. 434.

Latin American communist parties feel that, under certain circumstances, peaceful united front tactics and a gradual transition may be more appropriate, but also because he is, for the Russians, a very expensive ally, with the prospect that it may cost them more, if Castro's approach to revolution by guerrilla warfare becomes more wide-spread. The Cuban revolution has been a problem for the communists from its very beginning.

The Cuban revolution was one in which a country was delivered to the communists by an allegedly non-communist national leader, without help from the communists and without help from Russia. A national rising was converted into a communist revolution, although it contradicted practically all communist predictions and established forms. It took place in a country which had a comparatively high standard of living for Latin America. It was a middle class revolution in which the role of the workers was negligible, or rather non-existent.¹⁵⁸ The general strike envisaged by Castro as the final revolutionary stroke, did not materialize in the absence of workers' participation. The Cuban workers were trade-union-minded, and "were doing too well under Batista to take the risk, and the official Cuban Communists deliberately sabotaged the strike because they had not been consulted and no attempt was made to reach an agreement with them in advance."¹⁵⁹ It was not an "anti-imperialist" revolution, because Castro, as late as 1958, asserted that he had no intention of expropriating or nationalizing foreign investments, and declared that any attempt at wholesale nationalization would obviously hamper the principal point of...[Cuba's] economic platform—industrialization at the fastest possible rate. He assured the foreign investors that their investments would "always be welcome and secure here."¹⁶⁰ It was not an "anti-feudal" revolution either, because there were no feudal establishments in Cuba. Russian works devoted to the study of the Cuban revolution speak of course about the "anti-latifundist" tasks of the Cuban revolution,¹⁶¹ but neglect to explain that Cuban latifundias were essentially capitalist.¹⁶²

Castro's revolution was directed against Batista's dictatorship, in the name of the restitution of personal and political rights, with demands for a representative government, free elections and social reforms to be realized under the Constitution of 1940.¹⁶³ As Theodore Draper pointed out, "Castro

158. The insignificance of the workers in the Cuban revolution was admitted by the communist sources. See a statement by Blas Roca, quoted in Boris Goldenberg, "Latin America: Castro's Course," In Walter Laqueur and Leopold Labedz, ed. *Polycentrism: the New Factor in International Communism* (New York: Praeger, 1962), p. 252.

159. Theodore Draper, *Castro's Revolution: Myths and Realities* (New York: Praeger, 1965, 1962), p. 12.

160. *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

161. For example, Razumovich, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

162. Goldenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 252.

163. Fidel Castro Ruz, "Why We Fight," *Coronet*, XVIII, No. 4 (Feb. 1958), pp. 80-86.

promised to restore Cuban democracy and make it work, not a 'direct' or 'people's' democracy but the one associated with the 1940 Constitution which was so radical that much of it, especially the provision for agrarian reform, was never implemented."¹⁶⁴ Nothing in Castro's pronouncements until 1961 indicated that his revolution was to be a socialist one. On the contrary, as Castro admitted in his speech of December 20, 1961, his revolution would have failed if people knew that his guerrilla fighters were Marxist-Leninists.¹⁶⁵ According to Loree Wilkerson, Castro's first mention of the socialist nature of his revolution came in an interview published in *L'Unità*, an organ of the Italian Communist Party, on February 1, 1961, in which he said the following:

At any rate you wish to write that this is a Socialist revolution, right? And write it then... Yes, not only did we destroy a tyrannical system. We also destroyed the philoimperialistic bourgeois state apparatus, the bureaucracy, the police, and the mercenary army. We abolished privilege, annihilated the great landowners, threw out foreign monopolies for good, nationalized almost every industry, and collectivized the land. We are fighting now to liquidate once and for all the exploitation of man over man, and to build a completely new society, with a new class content. The Americans and the priests say that this is Communism. We know very well that it is not. At any rate the word does not frighten us... Yet, if such a great welfare conquest—which can be seen with my own eyes—is Communism, then you can even call me a Communist.

Miss Wilkerson also pointed out that the hints about the socialist nature of the Cuban revolution had come earlier from Ernesto Che Guevara, Castro's "ideological mentor," who, in his address to a Youth Congress in Havana in July 1961, said that the Cuban revolution was "applied Marxism." She also recalls that the following month Guevara said that "the laws of Marxism are present in the events of the Cuban revolution, independently of what its leaders profess or fully know of those laws from a theoretical point of view." (*Verde Olivo*, October 8, 1960, p. 18.)¹⁶⁶

The official announcement of the socialist nature of the Cuban revolution came somewhat casually at the end of a long speech delivered in April 1961. Castro was talking about the United States and said:

They cannot forgive our being right here under their very noses, or to see how we have made a revolution, a Socialist revolution, right under their noses... They know that this Socialist revolution is going to be defended with the courage with which our anti-aircraft gunners made sieves out of the attacking invaders!

Two more references to socialism came in the same speech:

This is a Socialist and democratic revolution of the poor and destitute for the poor and destitute!

¹⁶⁴. Draper, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

¹⁶⁵. Goldenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 253.

¹⁶⁶. Loree A. R. Wilkerson, *Fidel Castro's Political Programs from Reformism to "Marxism-Leninism"* (Gainesville, Fla.: University of Florida Press, 1965), p. 67.

And, finally, near the end:

Long live the socialist revolution!¹⁶⁷

Then, on December 1, 1961, came Castro's formal proclamation of his conversion to Marxism-Leninism.¹⁶⁸

Castro's pronouncements with respect to the nature of the socialist state Cuba was expected to develop into were sporadic and vague. He declared that the 1940 Constitution had become already too outdated and old, since it was left behind by the "socialist" revolution. Political parties and elections were condemned as "merely the means utilized by the exploiting classes in the pseudodemocracies to keep themselves in power." Castro announced that Cuban socialism would operate as a "direct" democracy in which there would be no use for political parties. He declared that the political parties were nothing more than an expression of class interest. He saw the only important instrument for expressing the will of the people in the revolution itself which to him was "a constant meeting with the people," and continued: "The revolution has changed the conception of pseudo-democracy for direct government of the people."¹⁶⁹ The notion of "direct democracy" hardly became any clearer in Castro's later statement made during a speech on July 26, 1961, upon the occasion of a celebration commemorating the attack on the Moncada Barracks in 1953. He made a comparison between the old, "false", democracy, and his new, "true", democracy, and declared:

For reactionaries, democracy is politicking; this is in effect anti-democracy which hides the exploitation of man by man. Such a democracy is that system in which only a privileged minority counts, in which the monopoly of the resources of the nation counts. This is not democracy, for they do not know what democracy is. But we speak of another kind of democracy, of the workers, peasants, of the humble men and women; it is the democracy of the majority of the nation, the democracy of those who used to be exploited, of those who previously had no rights. This is true democracy, the revolutionary democracy of the people, for and by the humble.¹⁷⁰

Castro's "direct democracy" or "people's democracy" (if we can call it that), or "democracy of workers and peasants" are of course the same clichés which can be found in the communist literature devoted to the Marxist-Leninist theory of the state. No wonder then that some observers use other terms from the same vocabulary to describe Castro's state, such as "revolutionary dictatorship of peasants and workers" (C. Wright Mills); "genuine dictatorship of the proletariat" (Paul Johnson); and "dictatorship of the proletariat" (Nathaniel Weyl).¹⁷¹

167. Quoted *ibid.*, p. 68.

168. Text in *Bohemia* (Havana), Dec. 10, 1961, pp. 51ff.

169. May Day 1961 speech, quoted in excerpts in Wilkerson, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

170. *Ibid.*, pp. 71-72.

171. Draper, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

Castro came to power without an official leading party, without an all-embracing ideology, and without an administrative government apparatus. Cuba's political structure was "that of a 'totalitarian democracy', ruled arbitrarily by a charismatic leader backed by enthusiastic masses, whose adherence was cemented by the benefits they had received, by hopes for the immediate future, and by artificially enhanced hatred of the Yanquis."¹⁷² In order to stay in power, Castro had to find some political organism to lean on, some kind of government machinery to hold together the revolutionary structure at a time when the initial enthusiasm of the masses would begin to evaporate when confronted with frustrations resulting from economic dislocations, scarcities, and the inevitable austerity. As a Soviet source put it,

Unlike Russia on the eve of the October Revolution, Cuba had no ready-made forms of government apparatus similar to the soviets at its disposal at the moment of the overthrow of the Batista regime. But it had a revolutionary army, dedicated to the interests of the people, created by the people, and rich in experience in political leadership in the important matters of the class struggle. It had political organizations, such as the Popular Socialist Party, the 26th of July Movement, and the Revolutionary Directorate.¹⁷³

As Theodore Draper observed, Fidel Castro was suddenly catapulted into power without having a "real party, a real army, or a real program." Once in power, he was determined to stay in power, and only the communists were in a position to provide the necessary instrumentalities of power. It could not be provided either by the 26th of July Movement, or by the student Directorio Revolucionario which both were improvised, personal, organisms, without any definite organizational structure, cadres and discipline. Only the Cuban Communist Party, the Partido Socialista Popular, had all that Castro needed, and it needed Castro as much as Castro needed it. But there were problems. The Partido Socialista Popular had a pro-Batista past, and was generally unpopular. The best solution was to arrange a merger of the three groups, preferably under a new name. So in 1963, a new Cuban communist party was founded under the name of Partido Unido de la Revolución Socialista, (United Party of the Socialist Revolution), with Marxism-Leninism as its official ideology. Castro's conversion into a full-fledged communist had two basic advantages for him. It forced the Soviet Union to help both politically and economically, and it put the Cuban communists under his discipline.¹⁷⁴

Castro's was a ruthless revolution. No transitional stage which otherwise appears customary in the Marxist-Leninist theory of the revolution took place in Cuba. The old governmental structure was smashed, the army

172. Goldenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 254.

173. Razumovich, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

174. Herbert S. Dinerstein, "Soviet Policy in Latin America," *American Political Science Review*, LXI, No. 1 (March 1967), p. 84.

dissolved, the masses were armed, foreign property and most of the property of the Cuban businessmen was expropriated. Yet the revolution was far from being a mass movement. The myth that it was a workers' and peasants' uprising was exploded by reliable observers. But it was a genuine revolution, carried out by small guerrilla bands, essentially middle-class in composition, and supported by small urban groups. The young intellectuals formed the core of the guerrillas. The most powerful element for the final victory was public opinion and the general passive resistance. Batista's armed opposition literally disintegrated.¹⁷⁵

The emphasis on the role of the armed guerrillas in the subsequent communist re-evaluation of the Cuban revolution is highly significant. Not only were the guerrillas declared to have been a substitute for the people in the revolution, but the whole Cuban concept that an armed insurrection is the only way of gaining power in Latin America is based on it, regardless that it is in conflict with the present Soviet strategy for the developing countries, where the Russians prefer a more gradual transition to socialism through united front coalition governments.

The essence of the Cuban theory of the revolution is that an armed rebellion can create conditions for a revolution, and that the revolutionary struggle should be carried out in the country-side rather than in the cities, because an open country is a more favorable ground for revolutionary activity than the closely watched illegal workers' movement in the cities.¹⁷⁶

The famous proponent of this type of revolution was the late Ernesto Che Guevara who, in his message of April 17, 1967, spoke of the "great doctrine of the invincibility of the partisans." This doctrine was to be the faith of all the dispossessed, and was expected to electrify the national conscience, and prepare the revolutionaries for even harder tests. In his message, Guevara said the following:

The hatred rises as an element of the struggle, a bitter hatred of the enemy, a hatred that far surpasses the natural scope of a human being, and transforms itself into an effective, forceful, selectively oriented, merciless machine of death. Our soldiers must be like that. A people without hatred is incapable of triumph over a ruthless enemy.

And he said further:

The war must be carried everywhere where the enemy takes it, in his home, his recreation places—the war must become a total war. The enemy must not be granted one single minute of peace, one single minute of relaxation outside his barracks, yes, not even in his own barracks. He must be attacked wherever he can be found, he must be hit hard everywhere. Then his morale will finally

175. As Draper put it, the tragic paradox of the revolution was that it was "essentially a middle-class revolution that had been used to destroy the middle class." Draper, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

176. Ernesto Che Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1961), pp. 15-16.

begin to drop. Although he will use even more violent means of fight, unmistakable signs of decline will make themselves apparent.¹⁷⁷

The Cuban revolutionary experience was elevated into a new, contemporary, theory of the revolution in the writings of Régis Debray who first came to Cuba in 1961, and made close contact with Castro, Guevara, and other Latin American revolutionaries. He drew military and political conclusions from his observations and from the conversations he held with Castro and other guerrilla leaders. His basic contention is that revolutions cannot be simply, mechanically, repeated according to the existing models, but that each revolution has its own strategy and tactics. He condemns attempts to identify the guerrilla struggle with other revolutionary precedents in the past, such as the Russian October Revolution, and says:

The armed revolutionary struggle encounters specific conditions on each continent, in each country, but these are neither "natural" nor obvious. So true is this that in each case years of sacrifice are necessary in order to discover and acquire an awareness of them. The Russian Social Democrats instinctively thought in terms of repeating the Paris Commune in Petrograd; the Chinese Communists in terms of repeating the Russian October in the Canton of the twenties; and the Vietnamese comrades, a year after the foundation of their party, in terms of organizing insurrections of peasant soviets in the northern part of their country. It is now clear to us today that soviet-type insurrections could not triumph in prewar colonial Asia, but it was precisely here that the most genuine Communist activists had to begin their apprenticeship for victory.¹⁷⁸

In the Cuban revolution Debray found a basic method of overthrowing the power of a capitalist state, and of breaking its backbone, the army, continuously reinforced by United States military missions: It is necessary to create a *mobile strategic force* by means of the more or less slow build up, through guerrilla warfare carried out in suitably chosen rural zones. The mobile strategic force is regarded by Debray as the nucleus of a people's army and of a future socialist state.¹⁷⁹ According to Debray, the Latin American revolution and "its vanguard, the Cuban revolution," made a "decisive contribution" to international revolutionary experience and to Marxism-Leninism:

*Under certain conditions, the political and the military are not separate, but form one organic whole, consisting of the people's army, whose nucleus is the guerrilla army. The vanguard party can exist in the form of the guerrilla foco itself. The guerrilla force is the party in embryo.*¹⁸⁰

177. Ernesto Che Guevara, "Mensaje a los pueblos del mundo del comandante Ernesto Guevara a través de la Tricontinental," *Granma*, Apr. 17, 1967. An abbreviated German translation, "Guevaras Aufruf zum Aufstand der Dritten Welt," *Ostprobleme*, xix, No. 14 (July 14, 1967), p. 388.

178. Régis Debray, *Revolution in the Revolution? Armed Struggle and Political Struggle in Latin America*. Translated from French and Spanish by Bobbye Ortiz (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1967), p. 20.

179. *Ibid.*, p. 28. Italics in the original.

180. *Ibid.*, p. 106. Italics in the original.

In this logic, the party is secondary, because "*the people's army will be the nucleus of the party, not vice versa*. The guerrilla force is the political vanguard in *nuce* and from its development a real party can arise."

For this reason, the creating of a guerrilla force must precede the establishment of the political vanguard party, because the political vanguard party is expected to develop from the guerrilla force.¹⁸¹

Debray sees in the present developments which are taking place in certain Latin American countries a confirmation of the correctness of the "staggering novelty" introduced into the theory of the revolution by the Cuban experience, because it is already apparent that the ideology of the new guerrilla commands is Marxist, and their revolution is clearly socialist and proletarian, whereas the ideology of the Cuban rebel army was not Marxist in its inception. According to Debray, the Latin American experience "ends a divorce of several decades' duration between Marxist theory and revolutionary practice."¹⁸² Debray concludes that, at the present time, "the principal stress must be laid on the development of guerrilla warfare and not on the strengthening of existing parties or the creation of new parties."¹⁸³

Viet Nam

The Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, the independence of which was proclaimed in Hanoi on September 2, 1945, ostensibly as a result of a successful general insurrection, shared with other "people's democracies" the pluralistic character of its coalition government in which the communists had a dominant position, yet managed to preserve an appearance of a more or less genuine coalition.

The national liberation movement against the Japanese occupation was formed around the Communist Party of Indochina and its leader, Ho Chi Minh. The Vietnamese Independence League (the Viet Nam Doc Lap Dong Minh Hoi) called the Viet Minh, was founded in May, 1941, at a meeting of the Indochinese Communist Party.¹⁸⁴ Ho's principal goal was to gain a widest possible popular support for the liberation movement, and to rally all national revolutionary forces in the struggle against Japan and France. The communist slogans were carefully formulated in order to attract all nationalists, regardless of nationality, religion, or political

181. Régis Debray, *Revolution in the Revolution? Armed Struggle and Political Struggle in Latin America*. Translated from French and Spanish by Bobbye Ortiz (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1967), p. 116. Italics in the original.

182. *Ibid.*, p. 106-107.

183. *Ibid.*, p. 116.

184. The Viet Minh merged into a somewhat wider organization, the Lien Viet, in 1951.

affiliations.¹⁸⁵ The emphasis on the nationalist character of the Viet Minh proved to be one of the essential elements of success of the revolutionary movement which enabled the Viet Minh to become "the most powerful organization of the broad revolutionary masses."¹⁸⁶

Under the auspices of the Kuomintang, a provisional government was formed in Liuchow on March 28, 1944. In this government, the Viet Minh actually represented a minority. This provisional government was replaced by the National Liberation Committee of Viet Nam on August 16, 1945, to be followed by the Provisional Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam which was formed on August 29, 1945, in Hanoi by Ho Chi Minh. The independence of Viet Nam was officially proclaimed at Hanoi on September 2, 1945. In the new government, the Viet Minh and the communists had a dominant position, and held all key posts. Nevertheless, the necessity of preserving an outwardly pluralistic façade of the government still persisted, and on November 11, 1945, the Indochinese Communist Party was dissolved as a sign of good-will toward the non-communist members of the coalition. The Vietnamese people's democratic government appeared here in an unusual form, as "people's democracy" without the formal presence of the communist party. Through a series of maneuvers, the Viet Minh reduced the significance of the non-communist members of the coalition even more. Its leaders talked the non-communists into accepting only seventy seats out of the total of some four hundred in the new legislative assembly to be elected in January 1966, on condition that the non-communists abstain from competing in the elections, thus assuring the Viet Minh a full control of the legislature.¹⁸⁷

The war with the French in which the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam had become involved by the end of 1946, further contributed to the consolidation of the communist power. The administrative centralization which became necessary led to an almost complete elimination of the legislative apparatus. The concern about the outward appearances became unnecessary, and a further radicalization of the political sphere was manifested in the reappearance of the Communist Party in 1951, this time under the name Dang Lao-Dong.

185. The proclamation founding the Viet Minh called for a unity of the "rich people, soldiers, workers, peasants, intellectuals, employees, traders, youth, and women" in the national liberation struggle against the Japanese and the French. Letter of Nguyen Ai Quoc [Ho Chi Minh], June 6, 1941. Ho Chi Minh, *Selected Works* (Hanoi: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1960-62) II, pp. 151-154. The slogans calling for an agrarian revolution were temporarily suspended, and replaced by less controversial demands of lowering land rent and interest, and for the confiscation of land belonging to the "imperialists and traitors." Vo Nguyen Giap, *Guerre du peuple, armée du peuple* (Paris: F. Maspero, 1966), p. 78.

186. Giap, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

187. Bernard B. Fall, "A 'Straight Zigzag': the Road to Socialism in North Vietnam." In A. Doak Barnett, ed., *Communist Strategies in Asia; a Comparative Analysis of Governments and Parties* (New York: Praeger, 1966, c1963), p. 205.

The Geneva agreement of 1954, authorized the Viet Minh to administer the northern regroupment zone, and thus gave to the communists control over a well-defined territory. The Constitution of 1960, aligned North Viet Nam with other people's democracies.

The success of the August revolution is attributed to the following circumstances:¹⁸⁸

- (1) A correct strategy of the Central Committee of the Party which made the national liberation the primary task of the entire Party and the whole nation.
- (2) The Central Committee of the Party gave at the correct time a new orientation to the revolutionary struggle, and recognized the necessity of an armed insurrection.
- (3) The Central Committee recognized whether and when the conditions were ripe for a success of an insurrection, so that it was possible to mobilize in time the entire party and the whole nation.

The official history of the Party presents the August revolution as an example of seizure of power which was carried out with the minimum of violence: a model revolution designed for a colonial and semi-feudal country.¹⁸⁹ The August revolution is said to have brought the following lessons, which are essential for a successful revolution:

- (1) careful preparation, both in the ideological and the organizational fields (including the training of cadres, building up bases of resistance, and the organization of armed forces);
- (2) seizing the right opportunity (*i.e.*, timing);
- (3) "launching the revolutionary high tide of the whole people" (the importance of having the support of the majority of the people by including in the movement "all classes, nationalities and religions");
- (4) skillful combination of forms of armed struggle with forms of political struggle (*i.e.*, avoiding the exclusive use of either and gradually shifting from political to military methods); and
- (5) making full use of the contradictions in enemy ranks and spearheading forces at the main enemy.¹⁹⁰

The military aspect of the war of resistance is stressed as a factor of a great importance:

Our Party has defined a correct line of strategy: to lead a long, protracted war, with reliance on the own means; and has defined an appropriate line of operations: a guerrilla warfare which would progressively evolve into a war of movement.¹⁹¹

188. Giap, *op. cit.*, p. 77ff.

189. Viet Nam Lao Dong Party. Central Committee of Propaganda, *Thirty Years of Struggle of the Party* (Hanoi: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1960) v. 1, p. 102.

190. *Ibid.*, pp. 97-102. Summary from George Modelski, "The Viet Minh Complex," in Cyril E. Black and Thomas P. Thornton, *Communism and Revolution: The Strategic Uses of Political Violence* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1965, c1964), p. 201.

191. Giap, *op. cit.* p. 101.

A guerrilla warfare is exalted as a form of combat designed for the popular masses, for the peoples of a weak, poorly equipped nation, which nevertheless is determined to stand up against an aggressive army with a superior equipment and technique.¹⁹²

The Vietnamese communists followed the classical pattern of people's democracy in their rise to power, and in the political form of their state. The Democratic Republic of Viet Nam was called the "first people's democracy in South East Asia."¹⁹³ It is interesting to note that the first Soviet theorists of people's democracy, Varga, Trainin, and Farberov, never called the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam a "people's democracy," although Farberov included Mongolia in his textbook, and mentioned North Korea at least *passim*. It will be remembered that the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam was not recognized by the Soviet Union until 1950. At a Conference on the peculiarities of people's democracy in the East, held at the Oriental Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR in November 1951, E. M. Zhukov included Viet Nam in the group of people's democracies of the East, together with the People's Republic of China, People's Republic of Korea, and the Mongolian People's Republic.¹⁹⁴ At the same conference, some speakers were nevertheless reluctant to treat the Asian communist states on an equal footing with the European people's democracies.¹⁹⁵

The Vietnamese communists called their state a "dictatorship of workers and peasants" at its initial stage, and a "dictatorship of the proletariat" later on.¹⁹⁶ The Vietnamese people's democracy had in common with their European counterparts a complete ideological allegiance to the Soviet Union. Its leaders were Moscow-trained, but were ready to learn from the Chinese experience. They placed a great emphasis on the creation of a revolutionary army and the preparation of land bases prior to the insurrection, although the Soviet revolutionary doctrine somewhat neglected these aspects, which proved to be of decisive importance for the success of the revolution in Viet Nam.¹⁹⁷

Unlike most people's democracies, the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam came into existence as a legitimate government when, on August 23, 1945, Emperor Bao Dai surrendered to the Viet Minh, and proclaimed his abdication. In his abdication proclamation the Emperor Bao Dai invited

192. Giap, *op. cit.*, p. 106-107.

193. *Ibid.*, p. 13. Fall calls the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam the Second oldest communist state in Asia (after Mongolia). Fall, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

194. "O kharaktere i osobennostiakh narodnoi demokratii v stranakh Vostoka." *Izvestiia Akademii Nauk SSSR. Seriya istorii i filosofii*, IX, No. 1 (1952), p. 84. A German translation in *Sowjetische Beiträge zur Staats- und Rechtstheorie* (Berlin: Verlag Kultur und Fortschritt, 1953), p. 297.

195. *Ibid.*, p. 304. See p. 15, *supra*.

196. Giap, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

197. See, for example, Modelski, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

all parties and groups, all classes of society as well as the royal family, "to solidarize in unreserved support of the democratic government with a view to consolidating the national independence."¹⁹⁸

While the legitimacy of the new government probably facilitated the communist takeover, it should be remembered that unlike other people's democracies, the Viet Minh revolutionaries lacked both the material and psychological assistance of the armies of another communist power, and succeeded in conquering the country largely by their own means. As Bernard B. Fall observed, "Viet Nam had for all practical purposes become a 'people's democracy'," in fact as well as in name, even while its territory was still occupied by Chinese Nationalists, British, and French forces—surely a unique feat among present-day Communist governments."¹⁹⁹

The case of Viet Nam is an interesting example of a seizure of power by the communists by means of well-timed and carefully prepared organizational, political, and military steps. The Viet Nam way to communism presents a valuable contribution to the study of revolution in a colonial country. The experience with anti-government guerrillas might be of value for a study of revolutionary tactics in certain areas. Ernesto Che Guevara's concept of a revolution by means of a guerrilla warfare necessarily comes to mind in the evaluation of the Viet Minh strategies.

The success of the communist revolution in Viet Nam was undoubtedly due to a skilled progressive monopolization of nationalist claims by communist organizations. But it is also true that this monopolization of nationalist claims makes the solution of the present conflict even more difficult. As Lacouture observed, Ho Chi Minh and his men are capable of moderation, but

as they belong to a radically different world, conforming to particular rules of political morality, and because they were aiming at objectives fundamentally different from those of the opposite side, they could not preserve for long the fiction of an agreement of "coexistence," and they cannot do it in the future except under the pressure of superior necessity dictated by Soviet and Chinese foreign policy.²⁰⁰

Zanzibar

Like other people's republics in the African group, the People's Republic of Zanzibar belongs in the category of people's democracies in name only.

198. *La République* (Hanoi), No. 1 (Oct. 1, 1945) translated in Harold R. Isaacs, ed., *New Cycle in Asia: Selected Documents on Major International Developments in the Far East, 1943-1947* (New York: American Institute for Pacific Affairs, 1947), pp. 161-162. Included in Marvin E. Gettleman, ed., *Viet Nam: History, Documents, and Opinions on a Major World Crisis* (New York: Fawcett Publications, 1966, c1965), pp. 59-60.

199. Fall, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

200. Jean Lacouture, *Vietnam: Between Two Truces*. Translated from the French by Konrad Kellen and Joel Carmichael. (New York: Vintage Books, 1966), p. 6.

During its brief existence, it had very little to show as people's democracy. It lacked both a Marxist-Leninist party as well as a uniting Marxist ideology. When Zanzibar became independent on December 10, 1963, it was intended as a constitutional monarchy, with the Sultan as its constitutional ruler. On January 12, 1964, just about a month after independence, the government of Zanzibar was overthrown in a *coup d'état*, and a new, republican government, led by the Afro-Shirazi Party and the Umma Party assumed power. The Umma Party was a well-disciplined party, and it expounded a Marxist ideology. The actual seizure of power was accomplished by neither of these two parties, but by a group of insurgents under the command of John Okello, native of Uganda, and formerly a policeman in Pemba. Okello's revolutionaries were recruited from two sources, policemen discharged after independence, and radicals from the Afro-Shirazi Youth League.²⁰¹ It was sometimes asserted that there were also Cuban militiamen among the insurgents, but this rumor has not been confirmed. Some members of Okello's revolutionary force wore Cuban-style uniforms, and adopted Cuban-like appearance which may have given rise to the rumor of Cuban participation in the revolution.²⁰²

Okello appointed a Revolutionary Council which consisted mainly of the members of the Afro-Shirazi Party and some Umma leaders, including Babu. The new President of the People's Republic of Zanzibar and Pemba was Sheikh Abeid Amani Karume. Sheikh Abdullah Kassim Hanga, who had spent some time in the Soviet Union, became Vice President, and Babu (Sheikh Abdubrahman Muhammed) Foreign Minister.²⁰³ The new Government was called by a Russian source a government of "workers, peasants and progressive Arab intellectuals."²⁰⁴ In a Declaration of March 8, 1964, President Karume announced that the Zanzibar Government would nationalize all land, and redistribute it to the peasants; that it would take over plantations from "capitalist exploiters"; and that it would nationalize all racial clubs.²⁰⁵ Under the new people's democratic government various political groups were quickly consolidated, the Umma Party merged with the Afro-Shirazi Party so that the latter became the only political party in the state. The People's Republic of Zanzibar was immediately recognized by the Soviet Union, People's Republic of China, and the German Democratic Republic, while the recognition by Great Britain and the United

201. Michael F. Lofchie, *Zanzibar; Background to Revolution*. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 274.

202. *Ibid.*, p. 276.

203. John Middleton, *Zanzibar, its Society and its Politics*, by John Middleton and Jane Campbell (London, New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 67.

204. K. Valentinov, "Zanzibar: Looking Forward to Radical Changes," *International Affairs*, vi, No. 3 (March 1964), p. 80.

205. A brief summary of the Declaration, and a favorable comment in Yi Min, "Zanzibar People Carry the Revolution Forward," *Peking Review*, vii, No. 12 (March 20, 1964), p. 12.

States was delayed until February 23, 1964. Okello, the leader of the initial revolt, left the country in the mean time, and was prohibited to return.

One of the main goals of the new people's republic to establish without delay a fully egalitarian society. Soon, however, it became apparent that the small insular republic was faced with insoluble problems, and in April 1964, three months after the revolution, President Karume of Zanzibar and President Nyerere of Tanganyika concluded a constitutional merger of the two countries. Under the Articles of the Union between the Republic of Tanganyika and the People's Republic of Zanzibar, both republics were united in one sovereign republic, the United Republic of Tanzania.²⁰⁶

206. Articles of the Union between the Republic of Tanganyika and the People's Republic of Zanzibar, section (i). Text of the articles in Lofchie, *op. cit.*, pp. 285-287.

CONCLUSION

Despite the present Soviet preference for non-violent methods of social transformation, manifested in the doctrinal acceptance of parliamentary roads to socialism, the extension of the notion of people's democracy and, especially, the introduction of "national democracy" and the popular front, as political systems which do not require a predominance of the communist party in the transitional coalition government, it probably would be wrong to assume that the goal of the revolution has been abandoned. It is sometimes asserted that the Sino-Soviet schism, by terminating an era of a unified ideological leadership of world communism, has eliminated or at least greatly lessened the danger of the communist advance in the non-committed part of the world. Although the split represents a definite setback for the communist prospects, it is likely to bring about an intensified competition between the two communist giants, which undoubtedly will increase their activities in the developing countries. It should not be forgotten that the dispute has changed nothing in the fact that both communist varieties, the Soviet and the Chinese, are still revolutionary and on the offensive, even though the first one appears more subdued at the present time. The revolutionary ferment in parts of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, bred by the combined forces of industrial revolution and virulent nationalism, provides an excellent background for the communists to use the situation for their own ends. The communist revolution operates in this favorable setting, joining forces with one or another and supplying ready-made revolutionary theory and organization to the numerous, if as yet formless expressions of protest. Khrushchev stated the communist position with astonishing frankness in his Report to the Twenty-Second Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on October 28, 1961:

Socialist revolutions, anti-imperialist national liberation revolutions, people's democratic revolutions, broad peasant movements, the struggle of the masses to overthrow fascist and other tyrannical regimes, the general democratic movements against national oppression—all these merge into a single world revolutionary process undermining and destroying capitalism.¹

Marxism has a considerable appeal for leaders of the emerging nations, apparently because the communists offer a technique for a mobilization of power and resources, promise a rapid emancipation from traditionalism,

1. N. S. Khrushchev, "On the Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Report by Comrade N. S. Khrushchev at the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, October 28, 1961," *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, XIII, No. 45 (Dec. 6, 1961), p. 23.

and provide also an organization necessary for the modernization of backward societies. An effective state organization is needed for the steps which must be taken in the period of transition during which a society prepares itself for sustained economic growth. Only a modern state organization can mobilize large capital outlays needed for a quick transformation. The communists offer such an effective organization in the form of a centralized dictatorship capable of liquidating, or at least keeping in check, the traditional power groups which, with their vested interest in the old and obsolete political and socio-economic systems, stand in the way of most of the modernization efforts. The revised theory of people's democracy, additions in the form of national democracy, and the revival of the popular front tactics, make it ideologically possible for the communists to establish political coalitions which would be able to neutralize various social groups entrenched in the regionally controlled agriculture and other sectional interests. While the communists naturally aspire to leadership in such coalitions, they also are willing to remain sufficiently restrained in their demands to make possible a concentrated effort of all progressive elements, but not longer than is absolutely necessary. Marxism serves here primarily as tactics for exploitation of every potentially revolutionary situation. Neither the revised theory of people's democracy, nor the theory of national democracy is a rigid set of ideas. Each is a highly flexible guide to action. This makes it ideologically possible for the communists to join in coalitions with the representatives of the national bourgeoisie or even the aristocracy. The concept of a proletarian dictatorship in the form of a parliamentary republic may seem absurd, but it indicates the high degree of flexibility of which the notion of people's democracy was thought capable.

The idea of a strong state inherent in the Marxist dictatorship is one major feature which makes communism attractive to some leaders of the underdeveloped countries. The earlier-discussed peculiar Soviet position among great powers, which permits the USSR to pose as a champion of the rights of colonial and quasi-colonial nations, is an equally effective factor in the struggle. It is interesting to note that a Soviet source sees in this image of the Soviet Union a more effective factor than is the attractiveness of socialism itself. It has been admitted that the new nations often incline to the communist bloc "not because socialism as a socio-political system appeals to the national bourgeoisie, but because countries of the socialist camp are active champions of national freedom and state sovereignty of all peoples."²

Although the communist bid for domination in the colonial and semi-colonial countries may not yet have been as successful as the communists anticipated, it does not mean that the developments in this part of the world should be viewed with complacency. The communists never stop

trying to come back even after severe defeats. It is therefore increasingly necessary to understand how the communists operate. Despite occasional signs of conciliation on the communist side, it should always be remembered that the Soviet Union and, of course, Communist China, act with a certain continuity of purpose, and for definite long-term interests. Temporary political and, sometimes, ideological, retreats do not mean that the basic underlying assumptions of the communist actions have been abandoned. Such retreats are dictated by a realistic reassessment of the world situation, and often, by internal pressures which are inevitable even in communist societies whose rulers must preserve an appearance of perfection and infallibility. A temporary withdrawal does not mean a fundamental change in the final goal.³ The communists, whether led by Moscow or split between Moscow and Peking, are still committed to world domination, and the occasional periods of quiescence should not distract the attention of the free world from the basic fact that the only safe deterrent to the communist threat is superior military power, and the determination to use it against an open or surreptitious aggressor.

As noted, people's democracy appears to have lost some of its usefulness as a guide to action for the communists parties operating in the developing countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, while it still remains the official theory for the social transformation of Eastern Europe and some Asian countries. The reasons why people's democracy was thought less applicable to the developing countries are fairly evident. Although people's democracy was a political system based on a coalition between the communists and the non-communist parties, its coalition government stood too obviously committed to a complete communist domination, both in theory and in practice. National democracy, which also is based on a coalition between the communists and non-communists, does not make any claims for the "hegemony" of the communist party, and as such, could be more acceptable to the leaders of various new nations who seek national unity even at the price of cooperation with the communists. The question is, however, how much future there is for the non-communist members of a coalition government if they are openly and *a priori* declared to be expendable at some future, unspecified, date. It should be constantly kept in mind that both the theory of people's democracy and the theory of national democracy are essentially theories of the art and science of the

3. See for example this statement: "The communist movement, like every living and growing organism, knows various periods of a tempestuous growth as well as that of a gradual development, collecting of forces and overtaking of obstacles." F. Burlatskiĭ-E. Kuskov, "V bor'be za splochnennost' kommunisticheskikh sil," *Pravda*, Jan. 20, 1967. An abbreviated German translation "Moskau und die welt-revolutionäre Bewegung," *Ostprobleme*, xix, No. 8 (Apr. 21, 1967), p. 255.

seizure of power by a determined communist minority. It is up to the Western leaders to provide alternatives of progress along the lines of social justice, equal opportunity, and mutual understanding. Communism is by no means the only road to effective state organization that can consolidate a country during the transitional stage. Though the communist technique for mobilizing power and resources poses a formidable problem in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America, the West can meet this challenge by "creating, in association with the non-communist politicians and peoples of the pre-conditions and early take-off areas, a partnership which will see them through into sustained growth on a political and social basis which keeps open the possibilities of progressive, democratic development."⁴

Past experience seems to indicate that the political formula of national democracy or of the popular front may become the pattern of things to come in the communist strategy. It is unlikely that communist propaganda would ever revert to the crude slogans calling for the establishment of soviet regimes in various countries which may appear in the communist timetable. Proclamations like that of the Communist Party of the United States that the "exploited and oppressed masses" will rise up and establish a "workers' and farmers' government" and organize their state apparatus in the form of "workers' councils"⁵ is apparently a thing of the past. Despite the clumsy, yet deliberate pleonasm in the name "people's democracy," the term itself was far more flexible and adaptable to concrete conditions than its ideological predecessor, the "government of the soviets."⁶ So is "national democracy" despite all its inner contradictions.

The Soviet theory of people's democracy is an example of how ideology can be adapted for an *ex post facto* justification of the policy decisions of the communist leadership. It is certainly not an easy task to make sense of the

4. W. W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth; a Non-Communist Manifesto* (Cambridge: University Press, 1960), p. 30.

5. Communist Party of the United States, *The Platform of the Class Struggle* (New York: Workers' Library Publishers, 1928), p. 62. According to this platform, the Soviet Union is the sole country in which there is a "workers' and farmers' government" (p. 32). The expression "councils" is, used here in the same sense as "soviets" in Russian or "Räte" in German. As Anweiler pointed out, the "councils (Räte), as a definite historical-political concept denote representative organs which appear in revolutionary situations and which represent lower strata of society, such as soldiers, workers, craftsmen, etc. Oskar Anweiler, *Die Rätebewegung in Russland, 1905-1921* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1958), p. 5.

6. It has been noted that term "people's democracy" was put into circulation at the time of the creation of the United Nations. Though the concern for the United Nations was hardly the sole reason for inventing this new addition to the communist jargon, it is obvious that the vague term "people's democracy" was far more acceptable to the non-communist world than the terrifying sound of the "dictatorship of the proletariat." Angel Rugina, "Capitalisme, socialisme ou libéralisme social," *Annales de sciences économiques appliquées*, xv, No. 4 (1957), p. 444.

plethora of propagandistic phrases, constant invocations of the authority of the masters of Marxism-Leninism, semantic nuances, tedious repetitions, and futile trifles displayed in the Soviet and satellite discussions about people's democracy. Yet a patient and careful examination of this maze of scholasticism may provide a key to the understanding of current communist policy. The changes in the Soviet interpretation of the concept of people's democracy were directly connected with the various trends in Soviet policy. The Soviet doctrine of people's democracy has been a convenient instrument for providing theoretical authority for the extension of the communist political system to other nations. Communism is still a universal doctrine which aims at establishing a communist world order. The process of extension of the communist system is to continue indefinitely as opportunity arises, although the methods toward this goal may vary from time to time. The outwardly non-violent and peaceful character of the people's democratic and national democratic roads to the Marxist-Leninist form of socialism is exceedingly well-suited to the present Soviet pattern of peaceful coexistence and competition with capitalism. Both the theories of people's democracy and national democracy have their definite places in the Marxist-Leninist ideology, and are likely to remain an integral part of communist strategy.

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